

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

DSWD: SERVING THE PEOPLE

Paglilingkod na May Malasakit

THE COVER

DSWD: Serving the People reflects the main thrusts and priorities of the Department, the core of which is the Filipino people. This year's report highlights the unceasing efforts of the Department to craft effective programs to bridge the gaps between government and the public. The different faces represent the efforts of the Department to reach out to the poor, disadvantaged, and vulnerable sectors of the country.

VISION

The Department of Social Welfare and Development envisions all Filipinos free from hunger and poverty, have equal access to opportunities, enabled by a fair, just, and peaceful society.

MISSION

To lead in the formulation, implementation, and coordination of social welfare and development policies and programs for and with the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged.

CORE VALUES

The DSWD Core Values of Respect for Human Dignity, Integrity and Service Excellence:

*Maagap at Mapagkalingang Serbisyo
Serbisyonang Walang Puwang sa Katiwalian
Patas na Pagtrato sa Komunidad*



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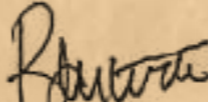
My warmest greetings to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on the publication of its 2016 Annual Report.

The Department has been the government's primary arm in implementing programs and services that aim to alleviate poverty and empower disadvantaged individuals, families and communities.

The entire world is witness to the dedication and commitment of the men and women of the DSWD in providing aid to disaster victims, abused women and children, trafficked persons, indigent senior citizens and those who have no access to basic social services. Through your efforts, we have given them not just momentary relief, but also hope for a better future.

May the DSWD continue to be at the forefront of our government's drive to improve the quality of life of our people. Let your accomplishments for the past year serve as an inspiration for you to further empower the less privileged towards the realization of their potentials and aspirations.

I wish you all the best for the years ahead.


RODRIGO R. DUTERTE
The President of the Philippines





To our employees, officials in all our DSWD offices, bureaus, units, and field offices, as well as our partners in serving the Filipino people, we are glad to present the 2016 Annual Report.

Looking back and reading the stories in this annual report allows us to collectively assess our work and the challenges we all face as public servants. Our work at the DSWD continues to be important because in all its many aspects, we seek to promote individual and family well-being, weave a stronger social fabric, and slowly but surely build the foundation for a just society where there is no exclusion and marginalization even as we all create a sense of belonging for the poor and those in need. We respond with promptness and with compassion during emergencies, and we ensure that our actions will not be tainted by corruption.

As workers in the field and profession of social work and public service, we face many challenges that are intrinsically connected to the problems that continue to plague Philippine society. There is widespread poverty among the ranks of the working people, and employment opportunities are not enough. The country is also frequented by natural calamities such as typhoons and earthquakes, and man-made disasters such as fires and flash floods also take place on a regular basis. Incidents

of armed conflict also continue to have a severe impact on the livelihood, safety and security of thousands of Filipinos in the countryside.

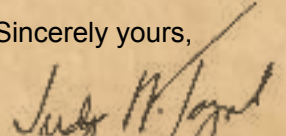
Given all this, it is imperative that we as a national government agency provide support mechanisms to the Filipino people as our clients and partner-beneficiaries so they can overcome challenges and develop resilience. We must also support our own employees and staff especially those in the field so they continue to perform their duties and tasks of serving our clients.

There is no doubt that we all want the same things for our clients – better health and improved well-being, increased financial security, and more stable means of livelihood and income. Within our agencies and organizations, we do what we can to achieve these for as many people by implementing our programs efficiently and with compassion.

At the same time, we should not stop learning and setting new goals, improving our systems and processes, and assessing our mistakes and errors with the intent to correct them so we can serve our clients and beneficiaries better. We should always make use of all opportunities to improve our social and human services to reach more people, hasten the development of more promotive and protective programs, and secure help for more individuals and communities in our country.

I hope that the stories of the 2016 Annual Report will inspire us to continue to rise to the challenges of helping our people during times when they need assistance and support the most. I hope that we can all work together to provide what we can to our kababayans to help them cope with the difficulties of living in a society where poverty remains widespread and opportunities remain limited. Let us remain true to the principles of pro-poor and pro-people public service and social work!

Sincerely yours,


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
 Secretary

2016 In Review

AFFIRMING OUR COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICE

In 2016, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) reinforced its commitment to genuine public service by focusing all interventions around the concept of “maagap at mapagkalingang serbisyo na walang bahid ng katiwalian” or prompt and compassionate service devoid of corruption.

In support to Pres. Rodrigo R. Duterte administration’s goal to be a ‘government for the masses, from the masses’, DSWD has begun to re-align its strategies, policies, and means of program and service implementation to make these more responsive to the needs of the Filipino people.

The focus of the DSWD is to continue and improve all its social protection programs so it can use its resources and expertise to make a dent in the country’s poverty levels. What we want is to genuinely reduce vulnerabilities, build resiliency, and empower individuals, families and communities. Much work has to be done to ensure this given the status of the country’s increasing poverty levels and the massive number of unemployed and underemployed Filipinos who have very little access to social services such as health, housing, and education.

The DSWD also aims to strengthen and improve its processes and mechanisms to address the needs of survivors of natural disasters and calamities. The Philippines regularly experiences natural calamities because of its geographical location, so there is a need to adapt and innovate in order to provide the help that survivors need as soon as possible even in the farthest villages of the country. To do this, we will continue to coordinate with concerned agencies and partners to ensure effective response, early recovery, and provision of complementary support services.

In 2016, we also began a thorough-going assessment and review when it comes to our financial records and spending, and we saw the need to closely evaluate efficiency and effectiveness in implementing DSWD programs, including the conditional cash transfer scheme.

As a department of the government, we reaffirm our commitment as custodian of public resources and utilize the same solely for the people’s interests.

We follow the instructions of Pres. Duterte to reduce requirements and the processing time of all applications, from the submission to the release. We strive to remove redundant requirements and ensure that compliance with one department or agency is already sufficient when we accept applications for assistance. We will also comply with the President’s order to refrain from changing and bending the rules of government contracts, transactions and projects already approved and awaiting implementation.

Finally, we continue to strengthen our relationship with civil society organizations, non-government organizations, multi-party and international groups and coordinate on efforts that will result in the implementation of programs and reforms that will directly benefit the poor in the short term, and contribute to their struggle to become economically independent in the long run.

This is our commitment to the Filipino people: a DSWD that serves the people with compassion, with promptness, and with an active stand against corruption. 🇵🇭

DSWD worker is CSC's awardee for 2016 Outstanding Public Officials and Employees



Sonia Ipang, Social Welfare Officer III of Field Office 10 and the head of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in Gingoog City, was conferred the 2016 Outstanding Public Officials and Employees (Dangal ng Bayan) Award by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in a ceremony held in Heroes Hall of Malacañang on December 19, 2016.

President Rodrigo R. Duterte, CSC Chair Alice Bala, and Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales gave the award to Sonia. She also received a gold-gilded trophy and P200,000 cash from the Central Bank of the Philippines.

As an awardee, Sonia will be automatically promoted to a one step higher rank based on provisions of Republic Act 6713, an act establishing a code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees, to uphold the time-honored principle of public office being a public trust, granting incentives and rewards for exemplary service.

The Dangal ng Bayan Award is conferred by the CSC to an individual for performance of extraordinary acts of public service, and consistent demonstration of exemplary ethical behavior on the basis of his/her observance of the eight norms of behavior provided for under RA 6713: commitment to public interest, professionalism, justness and sincerity, political neutrality, responsiveness to the public, nationalism and patriotism, commitment to democracy, and simple living.

DSWD Field Office 10 Director Nestor B. Ramos said that the recognition given to Sonia serves as an inspiration to all workers of DSWD in Northern Mindanao.

"She is the pride of DSWD and Northern Mindanao. I hope workers will emulate her great dedication and commitment to our agency, clientele, and country," Ramos said.

Sonia received the award for her passion and diligence in taking care of the children in conflict with the law (CICL). Under her watch, the RRCY in Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental taught residents to become more responsible through engagement in livelihood opportunities such as crafts making and backyard farming and engagement in other activities such as sports fests and educational trips.

Compassion, care, and dignity

Child protection is an important part of the work of staff of the RRCY. That is why implementing child protection programs is now strictly observed by the center. Sonia, a social worker, ensured that vulnerable children are well protected. She treated the CICL undergoing rehabilitation with compassion, care, dignity, and understanding.

To address issues and concerns the RRCY faced, Sonia implemented reforms at the center and encouraged all her colleagues to work as a team. She advocated for improved laws, policies, and systems so that the RRCY can reach its goal to help rehabilitate its clients.

Sonia had previously been to a training seminar in Cebu on Therapeutic Community. She applied her learnings and re-echoed these to her co-workers. This paved the way for the better implementation of the center's programs and services which involved both staff and clients.

She amplified lessons learned from other trainings she attended relative to handling difficult behavior



Sonia Ipang, Dangal ng Bayan Awardee

Empowering People CHAPTER 1

of CICAL. This resulted in the gradual improvement of the behavior of the children. Each child embraced the changes, and their behavior and conduct noticeably improved.

The continuous pursuit of excellent performance is Sonia's mantra in serving the center's clients. She was promoted as center head in 2004 and assumed office in 2005. Her first month was quite difficult.

As a newly-hired center head, she first performed two functions: as center head, and as a case manager/social worker. Then, DSWD hired another social worker in 2007 so she was able to focus on being the head of the center.

With her expertise, she was able to resolve all problems and difficult situations that arose in the center and among its clients. From having unattractive and dilapidated buildings, the center became a Center of Excellence after passing and maintaining the accreditation of the Standards Bureau of DSWD. As a Level III accredited center, RRCY now meets world standards in providing programs to CICAL.

The Protective Services Unit (PSU) of DSWD in FO 10 directs and manages heads of the various centers. It is well aware of the personal contributions of Sonia in making the center a better and safer place for CICAL.

Rosemarie Conde, PSU head, shared that Sonia would immediately find solutions and resolve complex problems.

"She always innovates and closely works with her colleagues, inspires and encourages them to work as a team. She has greatly contributed to the development of the center and the total rehabilitation of the children as a center head and as a mother to all in the center," Conde said.

The recovery of many of its clients can also be attributed to Sonia's good work. One of them is Rustie Quintana, who, after undergoing reformation and rehabilitation at the center, was chosen as one of the Ten Outstanding Youth of the Philippines. No less than former President Benigno S. Aquino III handed over the award to Quintana on December 6, 2012 at the Malacañang Palace.

Committed and dedicated

For the last three years, there have been significant improvements in the RRCY under Sonia's leadership. Her hardwork and perseverance in running the center of DSWD has been so enormous

that DSWD officials, through former Regional Director Atty. Araceli F. Solamillo and current Director Ramos, exerted efforts and gave all out support to the programs and services implemented at the RRCY.

Resource generation

Sonia has mobilized resources for the completion of the second floor of the administration building of the center. The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) based in Gingoog City pledged help for its construction and completion involving a total amount of P2 million. She also inked a memorandum of understanding for its completion.

DSWD also hired good and competent staff assigned at the center to complement Sonia's quest to transform the center and improve the lives of the residents.

The Therapeutic Community and Milieu Therapy was used by the staff of the RRCY to monitor and resolve the multi-faceted problems faced by its clients. These strategies have decreased the number of residents who commit abscondence. Abscondence, in simpler terms, means the clients' act of leaving the RRCY without permission.

Recognition and commendation

The RRCY under Sonia's leadership received commendations from DSWD Central Office for attaining the highest standard of accreditation, Level III. The said accreditation was given on December 2015.

The center maintains well-organized and monitored case management and records keeping processes. It continues to provide intervention program to each client based on his/her psychosocial needs.

"The strong leadership of Sonia is evident and this can be attributed to her over-all work as the center manager, garnering an outstanding performance over and above other centers/ facilities run and managed by DSWD FO 10," said Assistant Regional Director for Administration, Manuel M. Borres.

Borres said that RRCY in FO 10 stands as one of the most prestigious centers in the Philippines, a facility which can be called a social laboratory which private organizations, non-government organizations, and government organizations could consider as a model center to replicate. 🍷

Elsie Gaches Village

CONTINUES TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN

Special Children



Elsie Gaches Village (EGV), the sprawling facility located in Alabang, Muntinlupa serves as the only government institution that provides care and rehabilitation to abandoned, neglected, dependent, and founding children as well as adults with special needs such as those with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, and other intellectual and neuro-developmental disorders.

On February 3, 1964, an American couple, Samuel and Elsie Gaches, donated their 16-hectare-lot and rest house to the Philippine government to be used as the site for a government shelter for the needy. From then on, the facility has evolved to become what it is today: haven for mentally-challenged persons.

The residents of EGV are able to live normal lives because of the nurturing environment the center provides through its various services and programs, namely: social, health, educational, psychological, productivity, home life, recreational, developmental services and spiritual programs.



There are also paramedical, psychiatric, dietary, and occupational therapy. The center also conducts music and art therapy programs, skills training, and sports activities.

Nurturing environment

Maria Villa (not her real name), 35, was abandoned by her family. She has been staying at EGV since 1997.

When asked what keeps her busy at the center, she replied, *"Tumutulong po ako sa paglilinis ng aming cottage, paghuhugas ng mga pinagkainan at sa iba pang mga gawain* (I help clean our cottage, wash dishes, as well as other chores)."

Aside from helping the house parents, Maria also plants vegetables and ornamental plants.

"Gardening is good therapy for them," says Amor Macapanpan, Social Welfare Officer III. She has been with EGV for only a year, but she has made the round of different centers managed by the DSWD.

Another resident, Melba Santos, 24, has been staying at EGV since 2001. Like Maria, she also does chores in the center.

According to Amor, Melba and her sister were abandoned by their parents. Her younger sister, Minda, was adopted by an American couple. In the meantime, Melba, who is a person with disability (PWD), was endorsed to Nayon ng Kabataan, another DSWD-run center. She was later transferred to EGV.

In July, Minda visited her sister while on a trip to the Philippines. Melba wistfully said, *"Sana kunin na ako ng kapatid ko para magkasama na kami* (I wish my sister would come for me and take me with her so we can be together)."

On the other hand, Arnold Guzman, 20, arrived in EGV in 2007. He was already adopted by an American couple, but when they found out that the boy had bipolar disorder, they opted to have him repatriated.

Since he has shown keen interest in sports, particularly soccer, Arnold became a member of the EGV soccer team composed of 15 players. Along with residents from other centers, he has already participated in tournaments like the Alaska Tournament sponsored by Ayala Malls and in the Special Olympics held in California, USA.

"Nakasali din po kami sa ibang tournaments katulad noong ginawa sa La Union at sa mga schools (We have already competed in other tournaments, like the one held in La Union and in schools)," Arnold happily narrated.

The EGV soccer team practices on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays every 5 in the afternoon.

Maria, Melba, and Arnold are one in saying that the social workers and house parents are all kind, and they are happy being nurtured at the center.

However, they still yearn for a family they can call their own even through adoption. It is a challenge to find families who can easily care for children with special needs.

Wish list

The social workers at EGV have compiled a wish list of items badly needed at the center.

"We hope that kind-hearted individuals and groups could provide some of these items which we can't afford because of budget constraints," Amor explained. They also need clothes (t-shirts, shorts, sando, pajama), mats/blankets, towels, and toiletries.

She also mentioned the need for cleaning materials, kitchen utensils, medicines, office equipment, oxygen tanks, emergency lights, a high-speed sewing machine, gardening tools, sound system, and sports equipment.

Aside from material things, the center also appeals to public and private donors to sponsor outdoor activities for the residents. They said that it would do the residents much good if they had occasional opportunities to go on camping and community trips. It would also be beneficial for them if they could attend educational trips and socialization activities.

They also need sponsors for sports training on bowling and gymnastics.

"Actually, mahaba po ang mga listahan ng mga pangangailangan namin dito sa center (Actually, we have a long list of things needed here at the center)," Amor added.

EGV's budget for 2016 is P36,561,525. Out of this amount, P29,728,701.21 has been obligated for the over-all operations of the center.

Issues and challenges

Because of the undeniable need for additional support, the social workers and house parents at the EGV double their effort to teach the residents to become independent.

To date, the EGV has 14 cottages and a halfway house that provide shelter to 625 residents, more than its actual 470 bed capacity.

According to Amor, each cottage should only house 30 residents, but with the current number, 60 individuals now stay in almost all the cottages.

Of the 625 residents, 284 are females and 341 are males.

"We also need at least P1 million for the construction of a new admission cottage," she said.

When asked why a single cottage costs so much, she replied that the two-storey structure should be made of sturdy materials, such as cement, bricks, and stones.

The center is also understaffed, with only six social workers directly handling the cases. The ideal ratio is one social worker for every 25 clients, but since EGV now has 625 residents, each social worker is handling 80 cases.

EGV currently has 119 house parents, with 44 receiving their salaries from private corporations. In the meantime, 36 are regular employees, 26 are MOA workers, nine are contractual, while four are job order.

"We badly need additional personnel to ensure that the residents' needs are met," Amor emphasized.

DSWD Secretary Judy M. Taguiwalo appeals to corporations and generous individuals to donate or volunteer, just like what social media advocate Mocha Uson is doing for the RSCC and GRACES, two of the Department's institutions for abandoned and neglected children, and older persons, respectively.

"Kailangan ng mga residente sa aming mga centers ng kalinga at pagmamahal, natutuwa sila kapag may bumibisita at kumakausap sa kanila, kaya't sana ay may mga magboluntir na indibidwal o mga grupo (The residents in our centers need loving care. They are happy whenever people visit and talk to them, so I hope there are individuals and groups who would care to volunteer)," Sec. Taguiwalo continued.

"Patuloy din ang pag-a-assess sa mga centers upang matukoy ang mga kakulangan at masolusyunan ang mga ito (Assessment of centers is ongoing to determine what is lacking and provide solutions for these)," she added.

The EGV staff are hoping that with the new administration, the problems which they are facing on a daily basis will be resolved soon. 🍀

"The residents in our centers need loving care. They are happy whenever people visit and talk to them, so I hope many more individuals and groups would volunteer."





One of the tribes located in the far-flung regions of the Negros Islands is the Bukidnong Tabihanon tribe.

Also known as the Magahat indigenous peoples, the Bukidnong Tabihanon is a peaceful tribe composed of 316 members who are working together to secure their land and protect it against capitalist plunder.

In order to reach their area, people would have to trek from 8 to 9 hours to arrive in their village in Brgy. Pacuan, Jimalalud, one of the farthest barangays in Negros Oriental.

At first, it was not surprising that the Bukidnong Tabihanon tribe became suspicious of implementation of the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS) program of the DSWD when it started in 2012.

Its inaccessibility has prevented many residents of Brgy. Pacuan from getting the social services they need. When help arrived, in many cases, the Bukidnong Tabihanons were not consulted about it, or the help given does not respond to the actual need of the intended beneficiaries. Hence, they have become wary of government programs.

The concept of community-driven development was also a novelty for them. According to Epifanio Hermino, 54, a tribal leader, just like the students in school being taught a new lesson, the IPs have to be guided about the importance and processes in the implementation of Kalahi-CIDSS in their area.

"Naglibog mi kung unsa man ni ilang mga gi pang sulti namo (We were confused about what they were trying to teach us)," he said.

It took a lot of effort for the staff of Kalahi-CIDSS to connect to the Bukidnong Tabihanons. Even getting people to sign the attendance sheet was a challenge. It was not so much that they did not want to sign it, rather they could not write their names because they did not know how to read and write in the first place. As a way to resolve the difficulty this situation presented, the Kalahi-CIDSS team brought ink pads so the Bukidnong Tabihanons could affix their thumb marks instead of signatures.

The Kalahi-CIDSS team also explained the concept of the program using pictures that showed the different sub-projects that have been implemented in the neighboring villages of Pacuan. When they saw the pictures, the Bukidnong Tabihanons became interested in implementing their own sub-project. They wanted to discover for themselves how to manage and build their own sub-project and be directly in charge of its implementation – including the processing of the documents for the sub-project.

Since most of them are farmers, the Bukidnong Tabihanons sell root crops as a means of livelihood. Getting their produce to market, however, is fraught with difficulty – the farmers have to walk for several hours across rough terrain, then cross a river to get to the nearest market. They cannot use carabaos to cross the river because the current is often too strong.

"Ang suliran kabahin sa unang panahon sa among tribo kay ang kalisod sa pagdala sa among paciente sa tambalan; ang kalisod sa pagdala sa among mga produkto sama sa gabi, balanghoy, saging, calumpang, luy-a, ug carrots padulong sa merkado. Ug ang among mga bata nga ga eskwela maglisod ug mabasa gyud intawon kung mo labang sila sa suba (The problems that our tribe faced before were the difficulty in transporting our patients to the nearest health center; the difficulty in transporting our crops and products like taro, banana, cassava, ginger and carrots to the town's market area. Our children who go to school everyday have to be soaked just to cross the river)," said Epifanio.

The Kalahi-CIDSS staff had to exert extra effort to get the trust and support of the residents. According to Dexter Gimena, the KC-MCC Regional Community Development Specialist of Region 7, the people adapted a "wait and see" approach: they refrained from helping at the beginning to see if something would actually happen first.

The Bukidnong Tabihanons began to actively participate in the Kalahi-CIDSS project in their town when they realized that the program would provide them opportunities to be involved.

For example, in barangay assemblies, they found themselves being given the chance to speak up regarding their issues and concerns about their village, even about the sub-project they were to implement.

"Ang Kalahi ra jud ang nakapa empower namo (Kalahi-CIDSS empowered us)," Epifanio said.

"Gi hatag na sa mga katawhan ang katungod sa mga proyekto na among gi kinahanglan (The community was given the power to decide and implement the sub-project that we need)," he added.

Even the identification of the sub-project to implement was put in the hands of the community. In their case, they chose a 50-meter linear bridge over the river.

"Ang gi honoran jud diha ang mga Tabihanon jud (The Bukidnong Tabihanon were privileged through the project)," Epifanio said. He himself joined as part of the Brgy. Representation Team (BRT), a volunteer group of Kalahi-CIDSS responsible for presenting their proposal in front of the other BRTs

of other villages to contend for funding for their proposed sub-project.

Epifanio said that the women actively participated in the construction of the bridge, carrying sacks of sand and boulders needed for their sub-project. While the men initially tried to stop them from doing so, the women insisted on helping in the construction.

The bridge construction started in 2012 and was completed in 2013. It benefits 391 households, which includes members of the Bukidnong Tabihanon tribe.

The community residents now regularly use the bridge. They no longer have to contend with the difficulties they used to experience before the bridge was built.

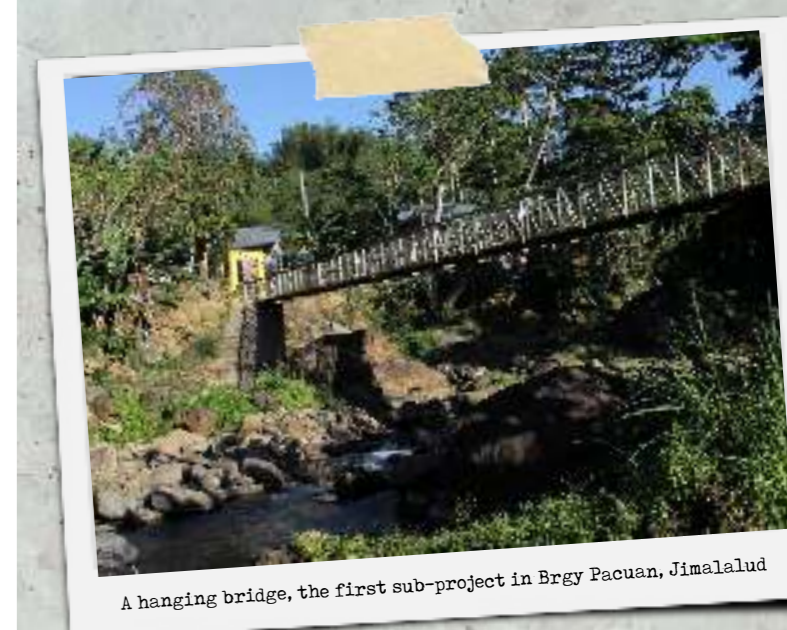
Epifanio was grateful for the program, saying, "Nalipay [jud mi] kay mao jud na among rason [na kana na foot bridge ang nasabutan] sa tibook barangay kay mao jud na ang kinahanglan sukad pa sa mga katigulangan (We are very happy with the sub-project because this is what our barangay needed for the longest time)."

He continued, "Umintado na ang edukasyon sa mga bata dili na mabugto, bisan ang sa mga hamtong padayon na (The children's education and the adults' work will no longer be hampered)."

He also said, "Maluoy mi sa mga estudyante na mo tabok, labi na kung mating-ulan, mabasa sila, mapuno sila ug lapok pag adto nila sa eskwelahan (We saw the situation of the students in our barangay. Crossing the river to get to their school was a challenge for them, especially during rainy season)."

A health station, another sub-project of Kalahi-CIDSS, is being constructed in Brgy. Pacuan. This was chosen by the residents so they can have more access to health care support. As of May 2016, the health station, which is intended to benefit 254 households, is 95% completed.

"Naa na pud mi health center, dako kaayo na tabang kay madala na dayon namo ang mga paciente diri (We now have our health center, this is also a big help to our tribe because we can now bring our patients here)," Epifanio said.



A hanging bridge, the first sub-project in Brgy. Pacuan, Jimalalud

"We are very happy with the sub-project because this is what our barangay has needed for the longest time."

KAPIT-BISIG LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN-COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES (KALAH-CIDSS) (2016)

2,748,783 households benefited from 10,625 community-driven development (CID) projects

A homeless family now finds shelter

Mother Teresa once said, "It is not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving."

Virginia Sison, 29, from Butuan City, and a mother to four children, became a partner-beneficiary of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) under the Modified Conditional Cash Transfer for Homeless Street Families (MCCT-HSF).

This program is designed to reach out to families who are definitely poor and more vulnerable and disadvantaged, but are not covered by the Regular Conditional Cash Transfer (RCCT) and were not assessed by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) or Listahanan.

Battlefield of a homeless

"Lisod kaayo. Didto ra mi sa karsada matulog ug gapalimos ra mi aron mabuhi mi ug makapalit sa among pagkaon (It was really hard. We were sleeping on the streets and begging for money to buy food)," Virginia said.

"Sa among pagpalimos sa isa ka adlaw, usahay kay P200 ang kwarta na among makuha pero usahay pud kay P100. Tapos magpalit mi ug gatas para sa mga bata ug mag-lodge mi sa Mitz Lodge aron di pud sila tun-ogan (Sometimes our money will reach P200 and sometimes P100. We buy milk for the kids and stay at Mitz Lodge for the night so the children will not feel cold)," she added. Mitz lodge is a local lodging establishment that rents rooms cheaply.

Aside from begging, there are times that her husband guards the cars parked at certain establishments and receives a little amount of money.

"Wala man ko nakatapos sa pag-eskwela ug wala pud mudawat sa ako a kung mang-apply ko ug trabaho (I was not able to finish my studies and no one will accept me if I try to apply for work)," her husband shared.

Life inside a house and home

Living a life with no house and home is one of the hardest struggles any Filipino family may experience.

"Dako kaayo akong pasalamat nga natabangan mi sa DSWD pina agi sa MCCT-HSF Program. Pina agi sa ilang assistance, naka renta kami ug balay nga amo ng gipuy an karon (I am grateful that DSWD helped us through the MCCT-HSF program. With their assistance, we're able to pay rent for the house we are occupying now)," Virginia explained.

"Karon ako nang mahatagan ug mas dako nga pagtagad ang akong mga anak. Di na kaayo ko mabalaka kay di na pud sila makabati ug katugnaw inig matulog mi sa gabie (I can now give more time to my children. I will no longer worry that much since they will no longer feel cold everytime we go to sleep at night)," she added.



Instead of worrying about food, Virginia can now focus on her family. And she showers her children with more tender love and care.

Education is the best weapon

The 4Ps is devoted to providing for the health and education needs of children.

"Karon ga-eskwela napud sa Special Education (SPED) ang akong kinamagulangan nga anak. Gapadala ra pud ko ug baon sa iyaha para dili gasto. Niingon gani siya nga bahala wala daw baon basta siya muskwela. Muhangyo na lang pud dayon ko nga mag-amping jud siya kay ako pang bantayan iyahang mga igsuon (Now, my eldest child goes to a Special Education (SPED) class. I usually let him bring his own food so he will not spend a single peso. And he even told me that even if he has no money he will still go to school. I also told him to really take good care of himself because I still have to look after his siblings)," Virginia said.

The Department exerts more effort in order to assure that Virginia's eldest child will be able to go to school. ❤️

"I can now give more time to my children. I won't worry anymore so much since they won't be cold everytime we go to sleep at night."



Virginia with her husband and children



Aida Cascato: Foster care champion

Looking after children who are not your own is one of the most self-sacrificing acts anyone can do. This is also a proof of unconditional compassion and generosity.

Such is the case of foster parent from Davao City, Aida Cascato, 54, who, for 21 years, has made it her vocation to care for abandoned and neglected children whose parent/s gave up on them or have been extremely incapacitated that they can not take care of their children.

Aida and her late husband started to foster children in 1995 when they were granted a license by the DSWD. From then on, the couple had lovingly and unselfishly nurtured a total of 16 foster children on top of their three biological daughters.

Aida recalled the whole family was interested in becoming a foster family.

Foster family care is the provision of a planned temporary substitute parental care to a child by a foster parent duly licensed by DSWD. In foster care cases, the child's biological, adoptive parents or legal guardians, temporarily give up legal custody of the child.

"My husband and my children were eager and were looking forward to having other children live with us even if it was just temporary," Aida said.

Fostering

Aida once dreamed to have a baby boy, but had three daughters instead. All three have been very supportive as foster sisters to all the children who came to their home and eventually left for permanent placement.

"Nag duha-duha gyud ko sauna kay gina-isip nako kung makaya ba gyud nako buhion ang usa pa ka bata, pero akoang gidayon kay gusto pud ko tagaan og pamilya ang usa ka bata nga gi-abandona (At first, I was really hesitant because I wasn't sure I could take care of one more child, but I went on to accept foster children because I wanted to help them)," Aida admitted.

For her first foster child, DSWD gave to her care a boy named Junniad. He came to Aida's family when he was two months old and was legally adopted seven years later.

"Tanan nga akoang gi-foster kay nagdugay sa akoga before nga ma-adopt. Lipay pud ko labina napulo sa ilaha kabalo ko nga na-adopt sa inter-country ug ang ilang adoptive parents kay makahatag sa ila og

maayong kinabuhi (All children stayed with us long before they got placed for legal adoption. I am very pleased especially since 10 of them were placed through inter-country adoption. Their adoptive parents will provide a good future for them)," Aida happily shared.

"I do not have the world to offer them because if I had, I would adopt them myself so that they won't have to leave us," she added.

Aida said that her secret was having a good relationship with God. She also taught every child what they need to grow up kind and considerate of others.

A foster child is allotted a monthly subsidy by the government to support his/her needs. The subsidy may be in the form of financial aid, goods or other support services.

Aida owns a boarding house and an internet cafe. She earns enough to support her family needs.

"I treat every child as my own. This is why I always provide the best for them and support them in every way I can," she said.



Some challenges

Many of the children who were left to her care had illnesses like asthma and allergies while some were underweight.

Being compassionate, Aida never rejected them. She accepted all. She is one of the best licensed foster parents of DSWD. She offered 21 years to share her home with homeless, disadvantaged children.

"Lisod ang pagpadako og bata, gibuhos nako sa ila, gipaskwela nako, hatod ug sundo pero ang kahadlok sa akong kasing-kasing ang pag let go. Dili tungod sa pagsuporta ug pagpadako nimo sa bata pero ang imong relasyon sa ilaha. Mura ko pirmi namatyan pag kuhaon na sila (It's hard to raise a child, but I still gave everything. I took care of them, loved them, sent them to school. There was always fear of letting go when the time comes. I feel like I am losing a loved one everytime a social worker comes to take away one of my foster children)."

When her husband passed away in 2015, Aida took a break from fostering. However, after just a few months she became active again because she knew that there are still children that need her genuine parental care.

Requirements

Under the law, those who want to become a foster parent must be of legal age; at least 16 years older than the child unless the foster parent is a relative; must have a genuine interest, capacity and commitment to parenting, and is able to provide a familial atmosphere for the child; must have a healthy and harmonious relationship with each family member living with him/ her; of good moral character; physically and mentally capable and emotionally mature; must have sufficient resources to be able to provide for the family's needs; willing to further hone or be trained on knowledge, attitudes and skills in caring for a child; and, must not already have the maximum number of foster children under his/her at the time of application or award.

"Foster family care is better than institutional care or growing up in a center or an institution without a mother and father figure. That is why we encourage more couples or qualified individuals to become foster parents," DSWD Region 11 Director Mercedita P. Jabagat said. 🍷

"I treat every child as my own. This is why I always provide the best for them and support them in every way I can."



Work in Times of Trouble

There is never a feeling as dreadful as being in a place torn apart by opposing forces whose main focus is to eliminate those on the opposing side through any means necessary. Surviving such a situation is difficult as you have to battle your own fears to stay alive. The gunfire and explosions can rattle even the bravest. It is not surprising for soldiers, after being in the field of battle, to come back forever changed. Some even experience mental and emotional trauma that last until their death.

When we take a job, we don't really think about what may go wrong. We usually think about how we will adapt to the new working conditions and the stress that it can give us or how we go about interacting with our new colleagues. We never really think farther than that. We expect tough times but not to the extreme that it changes us. Working in the midst of life and death situations is usually out of the question.

Joseph Valdez, a resident of Baggao, Cagayan, applied for a Listahanan* field staff position in DSWD Field Office 2 hoping to land a job that can support him and further his professional career. He braved the scorching heat of the sun that day to take the screening exam and interview. He was one of the lucky few who passed the screening and assumed a field staff position.

He shared that his work started out okay in May 2015. In the beginning, it was comprised mostly of receiving complaints from residents from the different barangays of Baggao to be given to the Local Verification Committee (LVC) members of the municipality for their judgment as to which of the concerns merit assessment or re-assessment. A couple of months after, he swiftly shifted to assessing and re-assessing the approved households.

The encounter

The first few days of assessing households went well. He visited one household to another to collect information that the Listahanan database needed. He verified which households were poor or non-poor, and he did the work without any difficulty.

Then the encounter happened.

"Nag-assess ako sa Sitio Hot Spring sa Baggao noong Disyembre 5 na malimit na nagiging sentro ng labanan ng militar at mga rebelde. Habang nasa bahay ako ng isang ini-interview ko, nakarinig ako ng putok (I conducted an assessment at Sitio Hot Spring in Baggao last December 5 where incidents of armed-conflict between the military and rebels usually occur. While I was conducting the interview, I suddenly heard gunfire)," Joseph narrated.

Despite hearing the gunfire, Joseph remained focused on the interview. He wanted to finish it as soon as he could so he could move on to the other households.

"Tinanong ko yung interviewee ko kung ano yung narinig namin, pero sabi niya normal lang yun sa kanila kaya nagpatuloy na lang ako sa pag-assess (I asked my interviewee about the gunfire, but he said that it

is normal so I continued assessing them)," he said. He struggled against his rising fear and controlled it as best as he could.

He was about to finish the interview when he again heard gunfire and very loud explosions. It was impossible to ignore the possibility that the conflict was moving closer to where he was. His interviewee told him to leave for his own safety. He agreed, so he got on his motorcycle and managed to keep calm. The road was not safe, but he knew he had to get away.

"Sunod-sunod ang mga putok at may mga pasabog na akong naririnig kaya sabi ng interviewee ko na umalis na ako at ayaw na rin niyang magpatuloy sa interview dahil sa takot. Ayaw ko noong umalis kasi nga takot ako sa daan at kabundukan pa naman pero tinibayan ko na lang loob ko (The gunfire continued until I also heard explosions. My interviewee became as anxious as I was and told me to leave. I was hesitant to go out of the house, but I fought my fear and left)," he said.

Just as he was speeding away, he was stopped by soldiers riding a truck. The soldiers told him not to leave yet because he might encounter rebels on his way down the mountain. They instructed him to follow them to a school which serves as their temporary base and hideout.

"Habang nagmo-motor ako ay may nakasalubong akong sasakyan ng militar. Pinapunta kami sa elementary school ng Sitio Hot Spring. Talagang nanginginig ako sa takot. Kinopya nila (military) ang travel order ko at sinabi sa akin ang mga area na hindi ko daw muna dapat puntahan at hintayin ang text nila kung okay na (I was on my motorcycle when I passed a military vehicle. The soldiers made me stop. I showed them my travel order which they copied. They then told me to proceed to the Sitio Hot Spring Elementary School. I was trembling so much. The soldiers told me the areas I should avoid. They said they would text me once things returned to normal)," Joseph said.

Joseph stayed in the school for the rest of the day. He recalled that the fighting lasted from 9 in the morning to 12 in the afternoon. After the rebel forces were subdued later that day, he decided to go down to the town proper.

Call of duty

It took eight days before Joseph got confirmation from the military that it was already safe to go back and resume his work of assessing households.

Despite his experience, he never had second thoughts about resuming his obligation.

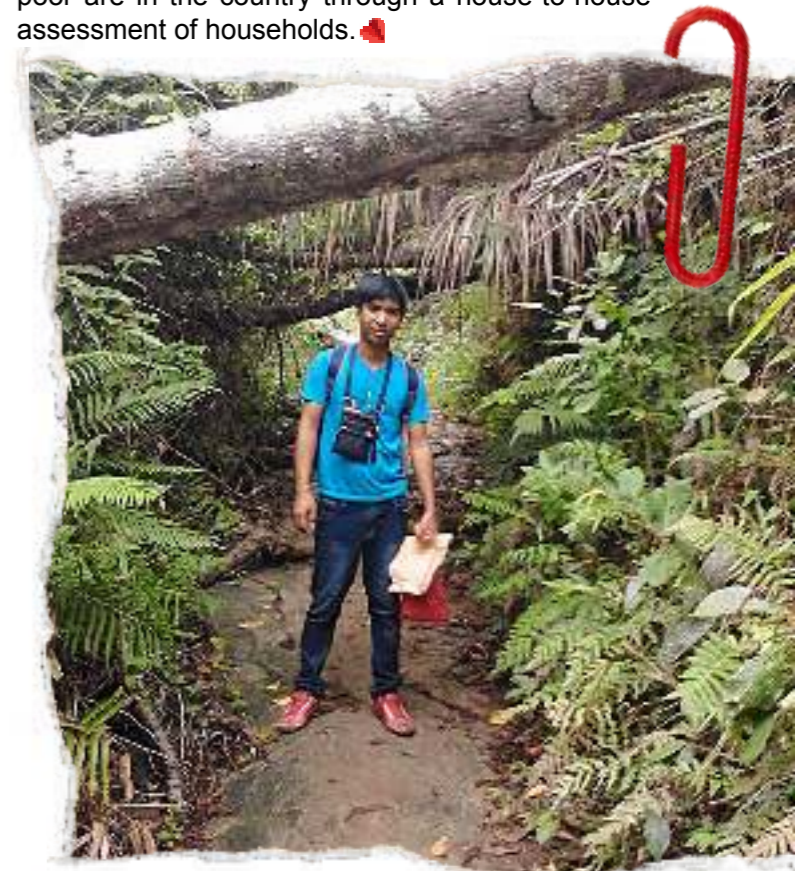
"Okay lang na bumalik kasi trabaho ko yun at kailangan kong gawin (It is okay for me to go back since it was my work and I have to do it)," he said.

He said that his experience made him stronger. His family often accost him about the dangers of his work, but he considers it a great honor to work for DSWD because of the challenges that he was able to overcome and the memories he made while doing his duty.

"Salamat sa DSWD dahil sa mga naranasan ko at natutunan na kahit pinapagalitan ako ng pamilya ko, alam kong malaking karangalan ang makapagtrabaho sa gobyerno (I am thankful to DSWD because of the experience I gained (from my work) even if my family does not always approve. At the end of the day, I know that it is a great honor to work in the government)," Joseph concluded.

Joseph worked with Listahanan until December 2015. He is now employed as a teacher in his hometown, continually using the passion that helped him cope with the difficulties and even dangers in his life. He uses the same passion now to teach children.

*Listahanan is an information management and targeting system that identifies who and where the poor are in the country through a house-to-house assessment of households. 📌



Finding courage to grow old alone



“Mahirap pala talagang tumandang mag-isa (It is really difficult growing old alone).”

Remedios Seda, 69, knows how hard it is for senior citizens to brave every waking day alone.

Lola Remedios, a resident of Brgy. Sapang 1 in Ternate, Cavite Province, has been living by herself for over 30 years. She never married and has no children—a reason she is alone in her wobbly house made of scrap wood and a worn-out roof.

“Dati, nagtitinda ako ng peanut butter dito sa amin, pero ngayon, di ko na talaga kayang magluto at magtinda (I used to sell peanut butter in our community, but I can’t cook nor sell anymore),” Lola Remedios said.

Aside from being old and sickly, Lola Remedios has an inborn disability which limits her physical movement. She cannot work to support her daily needs.

“Umaasa na lang din ako sa mga bigay ng mga kapitbahay ko. ‘Pag may sobra silang ulam, minsan binibigyan nila ako. Madalas nangungutang ako sa tindahan dito para kahit paano ay may makain ako. Ganito na talaga ang buhay ko (I completely depend on the help and compassion of my neighbors. Sometimes, they give me left-over food. I buy food on credit from the stores in our community. This is how I survive from day to day),” she shared.

With her condition, Lola Remedios has no other choice but to rely on her neighbors and distant family members for her daily subsistence.

Unexpected blessing

In 2011, Lola Remedios found relief when she became a beneficiary of the Social Pension (SP) for Indigent Senior Citizens program of the DSWD.

“Napakalaking pasalamat ko sa nakukuha kong P1,500 kada tatlong buwan. Kung wala ‘yun, hindi ko na talaga alam kung paano na ako, wala na akong ibang aasahan (I am very grateful for the P1,500 I receive every quarter. I do not have any source of income or means of livelihood),” she gratefully shared.

The SP program provides a monthly P500 grant to qualified senior citizens in accordance with the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010.

Qualified beneficiaries are senior citizens who are 60 years old and above, frail, sickly, or with disability, and are not receiving any pension, and have no permanent source of income or regular support from relatives.

The beneficiaries of the program are identified by the Listahanan, an information management and targeting system that identifies who and where the poor are in the country through a house-to-house assessment of households.

This system generates a database of poor households, which is used by the DSWD to select beneficiaries of its programs and services for the poor.

Lola Remedios’ household was included among the 389,811 identified poor households in the CALABARZON Region during the Listahanan’s first round of assessment in 2009. As a result, Lola Remedios became one of the 314 beneficiaries of the program in their municipality.

“Napakalaking tulong talaga na napasama ako sa programa. Ang halagang natatanggap ko ay pinambabayad ko sa tindahan na inuutangan ko, saka sa kuryente kada buwan. Kahit paano, may nahahawakan na akong pera (I am grateful and relieved that I am a beneficiary of this program. I use the money to pay my debts at the store and to settle my monthly electric bill),” Lola Remedios said.

Convenience at their doorstep

Since the implementation of the program in 2011, beneficiaries of the program collect their pension on a quarterly basis at their respective municipal/city hall.

Every payout, Lola Remedios commutes to the town proper to get her pension.

“Nahihirapan na talaga akong maglakad kaya nag-aarkila na lang ako ng tricycle papuntang munisipyo para makuha ko ang aking pensyon kasi wala rin naman akong makakasama papunta doon (It is

hard for me to walk to the municipal hall so I hire a tricycle everytime there is a pay-out),” she said.

Like Lola Remedios, most of the beneficiaries of the program experience difficulties such as this because of physical limitations brought by old age and illnesses.

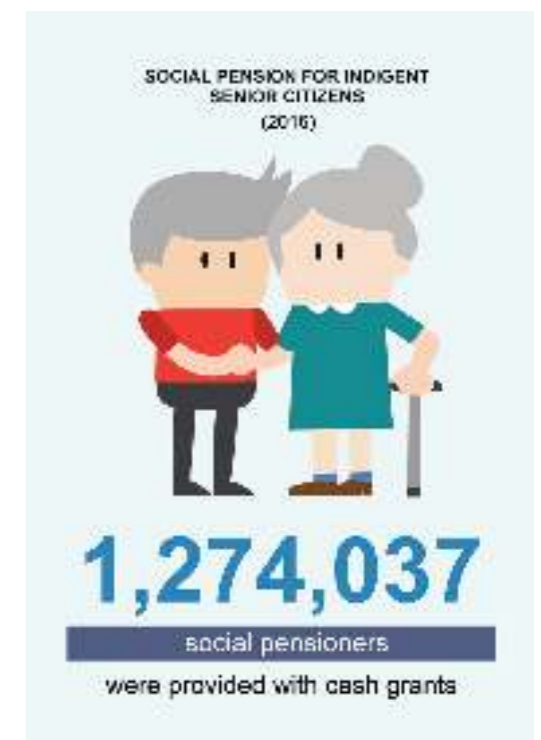
As a solution, the DSWD Field Office CALABARZON formed a partnership with the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB) to facilitate the door-to-door delivery of the pension to its beneficiaries.

Starting September 2016, Lola Remedios, along with the 85,638 social pensioners in the region, began receiving her monthly pension in their respective homes.

According to Ms. Melinda Cabillo, Municipal Social Welfare and Development Officer (MSWDO) of Ternate, this new payment scheme is helpful to many senior citizens in their municipality, especially those who live in remote areas and who are disabled, weak and sickly.

“Sana ay patuloy pa rin ang ganitong mga programa para sa aming mga matatanda, lalo na yung katulad ko na mag-isa lang talaga sa buhay. Dito, kahit papaano ay may nakakaalala po sa amin at may tumutulong (I hope that the program will continue to benefit the elderly, especially for those who are living alone),” she said.

For her, living alone during her twilight years is a little easier because she feels there are still people who care for her. 🍷



THE *ability* IN DISABILITY



In the small town of Bombon in Camarines Sur, access to different places was once a challenge for all of its poor villagers due to the absence of paved access roads.

For instance, students of Brgy. Sto. Domingo would have to walk barefoot through muddy paths in Zone 7 before they reach school. Their mothers would either bring a dipper to fetch water to wash their children's feet, or a rag to wipe off the mud before the students wear their school shoes.

Jane Nicerio, 42, a resident of the barangay, pity students whenever it rains. It is also very difficult for her to walk the same path because of her own physical disability.

Jane is a vendor with no regular source of income. She goes around their village on her bike to sell *kakanin*. She, herself also experienced the muddy

and slippery road in Zone 7. She recalled that one time, she slipped in the mud and fell. The incident hurt her badly. There was also another time when she slipped and spilled the food she was selling worth P300, the only money she had during that time.

"Nagapwersa ako magtinda maski mauran maski maalnas ang dalan para may kaunon kami. Nagibi talaga ako at sinabi ko talaga na sana maparil na ang dalan mi (I was forced to continue selling the rice cakes despite the downpour because I needed the money for my family. I was crying the entire time and wished that someone would finally do something to fix the road)," she said.

Jane comes from a poor family. She lost both her parents at an early age and lived with her relatives. She became a helper for her uncle's family who sent her to school in exchange for the help she provided. However, she failed to finish high school.

Today, Jane already has her own family; she is married to a farmer and they have one child. Their family moved to Zone 7, Brgy. Sto. Domingo 12 years ago.

Despite being a person with disability (PWD), Jane accepted the invitation to become a volunteer who would manage the construction of their concrete pathway in 2013 - a project that the residents have been waiting for so long.

Marlyn Suarez, another volunteer, encouraged her to participate as the Procurement Team Head in their community project.

"Maski PWD ka, makakatabang ka sa barangay (You can help your community even if you are a person with disability)," Marilyn told her.

Jane has difficulty walking and has crooked arms. Despite her physical limitations, she believed that

she could accomplish anything because of her determination so she accepted the invitation.

Jane proved that she could perform her duties as the procurement officer, even though it was her first time to be one. She set aside her timidity and learned to confidently present herself to different people.

During the construction of the pathway, she sacrificed two working days and went to different towns to look for the high quality but low cost supplies and materials needed for the project. She also devoted her time monitoring the laborers during the construction of the pathway, which started in January 2015. She encouraged them to do their best as the project was very important. The construction of the pathway was successfully completed in May 2015.

"Maski mag-uran o mag-init, magayon na ang dalan mi (Rain or shine, we have a decent road)," she said.

Jane is one of the 62,187 trained residents under the Kalahi-CIDSS, a DSWD program that seeks to help alleviate poverty through community-driven development (CDD).

"Dakulang orgulyo maging volunteer dahil tinawan ako ning tiwala maski PWD ako. Kaya ko man gibohun ang tigagaibo ning ibang normal na tao (I

am proud because they trusted a PWD like me. I can also be functional like a normal person)," she said.

After attending the trainings sponsored by Kalahi-CIDSS, Jane shared that she now feels more empowered. She has become an active member of their village.

"Mas nagdakol ang benta ko dahil mas dakol namidbidan ko (My income increased because I met new customers)," she said.

Jane proved that neither her disability nor her economic status is a hindrance to help her community attain its dream to have a concreted pathway. She demonstrated that anything is possible if you are determined to do it.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) funded the construction of the pathway in Sto. Domingo by donating a total amount of P1,433,000. The village also received a grant from Kalahi-CIDSS for the construction of a Day Care Center, which has a total project cost of P799,390.50.

MCC, an independent US foreign aid agency created in 2004 to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by helping countries promote economic growth, provided a grant for the construction of 679 community sub-projects and for the conduct of trainings to thousands of volunteers in Bicol. 🇵🇭





DSWD REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT
 KALAHI-CIDSS: NATIONAL COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT
 COMMUNITY SUBPROJECT
 LOCATION: SITIO LONGGAN, BRGY. CABURO, NAUJAN
BASIC INFORMATION
 SUBPROJECT TITLE CONSTRUCTION OF BALAY LAKOY
 TOTAL COST PHP 293,906.75
 KALAHI-CIDSS GRANT PHP 282,144.75
 COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION PHP 11,762.00
 LGU CONTRIBUTION
 OTHERS PHP 5,962.00
 PROJECT DURATION 26 CALENDAR DAYS
 START DATE
 TARGET DATE OF COMPLETION
 PROGRESS REPORT (AS OF
 PHYSICAL ACC
 FINANCIAL ACC



Ka Beting, BSPMC chair and Pantawid Pamilya parent leader

Reawakening of the Mangyan Alangan culture

“Mangyan” is the umbrella term for the 8 indigenous groups of Mindoro. Originally coastal dwellers, they migrated to the mountains to escape from the Spanish colonizers and Moro raiders in the past. The Alangan Mangyans dwell in northwest Central Mindoro, specifically the municipalities of Baco, Naujan, San Teodoro, and Victoria.

It is the end of another day. As the twilight sky turns a deep blue color and the cold breeze starts to drift from the mountains of Oriental Mindoro, darkness completely covers the land, save for the sole light from a fire burning in the middle of a big wooden house. Around the fire, clusters of people of all ages are talking, laughing, or singing by the warmth of the flames, their shadows flickering on the wooden walls of the *balaylakoy*.

This is how Vicente Sara, an Alangan Mangyan from Barangay Caburo of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, remembers his yester-years, back when their tribal culture flourished.

In the heart of Alangan culture

In the earlier days, the Alangan Mangyans were known to live in great houses, called *balaylakoy*, where up to 20 families shared one living space. The traditional *balaylakoy*, typically having one room only, provided more than a home and protection for the Alangans. It was also a sacred place where indigenous rituals and gatherings were conducted.

Each year, during the harvest season, the Alangans celebrate the *pamago*. Each family residing in the *balaylakoy* contributes some of their harvest. Together, they pound rice to remove the husk in the *palanggan*, the center of the *balaylakoy*. Residents, visitors from other *balaylakoys*, and even outsiders, are welcome to feast on their harvest.

“Pinakamasayang panahon sa *balaylakoy* ang *pamago* (The *pamago* is the happiest time in the *balaylakoy*),” Vicente Sara, more fondly called “Ka Beting”, cheerfully recounted.

This much awaited festivity is the Alangans’ thanksgiving for the bountiful harvest and their way of praying for the promise of the continuous richness of their lands. It is just one of their many ceremonies and rituals led by their greatly respected elder and healer, known as the *aplaki*.

Aside from rituals, the Alangans also gather around the fire that burns continuously every day in the *palanggan*, to resolve conflicts, plan for activities

of their community, and more importantly, bond with their family. Ka Beting explained, while sharing stories and chewing betel nut around the fire in the *palanggan*, the *aplaki* also teaches the beliefs and values of the Alangans to the youth.

Through sharing stories and enjoying each other’s company through the telling of *ambahan*, which can be in the form of chants or songs, the Alangans preserved their culture and lived in harmony.

Because Alangans live together, almost all adults are able to work on their farm, as the children can be left with a guardian. Wilma Garon, one of the older community members, said that various training on handicrafts and livelihood were also done in the *balaylakoys*.

“Lahat ng aspeto ng buhay ng katutubong Mangyan ay naka-angkla sa *balaylakoy* kaya ganoon na lang ang pagpapahalaga sa *balaylakoy* (All aspects of the lives of the Mangyans are anchored on the *balaylakoy*, which is why we give it much importance),” Ka Beting explained. “Ang mga activity na ginagawa sa *balaylakoy* ay hindi pang-personal na interes at purpose kung hindi pang-komunidad (Activities conducted in the *balaylakoy* are not for personal interest and purpose, but for the community),” he also said.

Decline of tradition

However, due to the vast amount of external influences, many of the Alangan Mangyans today have shifted from the communal *balaylakoy* to individual houses. Actual *balaylakoys* have grown more uncommon in communities. “Nakikita ko sa *pamayanan* naming Mangyan na naghahari na ang *impluwensya na galing sa labas* (I can see in our Mangyan community that external influences are becoming dominant),” Ka Beting said.

According to Domingo Torres, the Barangay Captain of Caburo, it has been almost 15 years since their last *balaylakoy* was destroyed by a typhoon. The Alangans’ sense of unity and togetherness seems to be fading as the number of *balaylakoys* has lessened. “Ilang *pamayanan* na lang ng katutubong Alangan ang may ganitong *balaylakoy* (Very few Alangan tribes still have a *balaylakoy*),” Ka Beting said.

Because the *balaylakoy* is strongly connected to their culture, their traditions and customs are slowly being forgotten, especially by the youth. “Talamak na ang *pagkakanya-kanya* (Individualism is becoming widespread),” Ka Beting added.

With all the changes in their system, it has increasingly become a challenge for the *aplaki* and other community leaders to resolve problems within the village. Unlike before when difficulties are resolved as a unit, some choose to ignore issues that do not concern them, even if these are experienced by family members. As such, conflicts have become more difficult to resolve.

“*Kapag nasa isang balaylakoy, hindi nila kayang sabihin na ‘bahala na yan’. Nandoon pa rin iyong pananagutan. Iyong problema nila, problema ko rin* (In a *balaylakoy*, they can’t just say ‘come what may’. They are also liable for others’ problems. Their problems are my problems, too),” Ka Beting said.

“*Nalungkot din kami na nakikita na ang aming kultura ay unti-unting naglalaho na kaya gustong-gusto naming ibalik ito* (We are saddened seeing our culture slowly disappear, which is why we want to bring it back),” Ka Beting said with determination.

For many of the older members of the community, the *balaylakoy* remains a sacred place where tradition and rituals, spared by the effects of outside influence, are still practiced. Some yearn for the restoration of these communal houses, as they symbolize their culture. “*Kung hindi man tuluyang maibalik ang kultura namin dati ay unti-unting makita sana ng susunod na salinlahi kung gaano kahalaga at gaano kadaming gamit ang balaylakoy* (We may not be able to totally revive our culture, but we want the next generations to know the importance of the *balaylakoy* and its many uses),” Ka Beting explained.

Preserving a culture of unity

The Alangan Mangyans know that the *balaylakoy* plays an important role in preserving their culture. As such, when the Kalahi-CIDSS of the DSWD provided Brgy. Caburo the opportunity to be part of it, they chose the construction of the *balaylakoy* as their sub-project.

According to Ka Beting, who was chosen as the Brgy. Sub-Project Management Committee (BSPMC) chairperson, or the leader of the Kalahi-CIDSS community volunteers in the village, the core purpose of the *balaylakoy* is to ensure that the spirit of unity lives within the community. And to successfully build their *balaylakoy*, they will have to strengthen this characteristic and work in harmony.

Accordingly, the whole community has expressed their willingness to help in the construction through *bayanihan*.

Article published in www.rappler.com on May 26, 2016.

Modernized balaylakoy

Unlike the traditional *balaylakoy* that has an undivided interior with the *palangganan* at its center, the *balaylakoy* constructed through Kalahi-CIDSS has concrete pillars, and has used indigenous materials such as wood and bamboo, for its walls and flooring. It has two extra rooms and a comfort room.

Its purpose, however, remains the same: to benefit the community. In fact, its functions are also projected to expand. It is used primarily for meetings or other group activities of the community members as well as a venue for their rituals.

The *balaylakoy* is also intended to accommodate students from other barangays studying in Barangay Caburo, especially during rainy days, when there are floods or when rivers become dangerous to cross because of the rising waters.

Part of the *balaylakoy* also serves as the office of the *Sangguniang Barangay*. Ka Beting has high hopes for the *balaylakoy*, now that it is already constructed.

“*Buhay na buhay ang kultura sa balaylakoy* (The culture is very much alive in the *balaylakoy*),” he said. The community hopes that with construction of the *balaylakoy*, the rest of the tribe are encouraged to protect and preserve their beliefs.

Their goal is that through the *balaylakoy*, the center of the Alangan Mangyans’ way of life, the youth and future generations will appreciate and be proud that they are part of a rich and beautiful culture. 🍀



An assembly of the Mangyan Alangan community in the *balaylakoy*



Poor B’laan teen FROM GENSAN IS AMONG top students in US

When he was born, his mother discovered he was different from other kids in their village.

At two years old, Jualina Soriano says her son, Marlito Jr., could already identify most of the names of animals. Her son, who most of the time went to school without taking breakfast because their income was not enough to cover their daily needs, finished his elementary years with honors and became class valedictorian in high school.

His father, a tricycle driver, earns barely enough to feed the family, much less send his children to college.

A grantee of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), Marlito, 17, is the eldest of six children. Under its conditions, the CCT allocates grants P500 to P1,400 for each beneficiary household, depending on the number of eligible children. Each family is allowed a maximum of three children to receive the monthly benefits.

Marlito graduated valedictorian from New Society National High School in General Santos City, and thereafter, he was recommended by their School Principal, Ms. Estrellita A. Tenezo for a scholarship grant.

Before getting a scholarship grant, Marlito planned to find a job after high school to sustain a college education which at first, seemed to be a highly remote possibility—until the scholarship came.

In 2014-2015, he had a series of tests and interviews with Boston University representatives in General Santos City and Manila. It was not easy for Marlito because there were 87 applicants nationwide who applied for the scholarship grant. Luckily, he was one of the only 2 applicants who made it; the other one is from Olongapo City.

He is a scholar of the country’s biggest port operator, International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), which is supporting his and another student’s education in the United States.

At Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts where he was taking up BS Accountancy major in Business International, Marlito landed in their school’s Dean’s List during their Fall 2015 semester.

“By God’s grace, he was in their school’s Dean’s List. We are happy for him. He told me he was not expecting it because he was still adjusting to the language, climate and food when he started his schooling last year. He hopes that he can maintain his academic standing throughout his schooling,” Jualina said.

To be included in US University’s Dean’s List, a student must earn at least a 3.500 grade-point average with no incomplete grade or grade below a C-.

“He told me that being poor or being a member of an indigenous group, is not a hindrance to get a degree in college. One should not boast and must look back where he came from. This is what he kept on telling me when he returned home for Christmas,” she added.

In his Facebook post, Marlito confirmed that he was in their school Dean’s List.

“As requested! Yes!! I am in the Dean’s list! Thank you Lord and to all who prayed and supported me,” he said.

In the same Facebook post, Marlito showed an email of Susan Ambrose, Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Experimental Learning of Northeastern University, who congratulated him on earning a place on the Dean’s List for his outstanding academic performance during the fall 2015 semester.

“Clearly, you have devoted much time and energy to your academic studies and your hard work and commitment have paid off,” Ambrose said.

“Your success in meeting the University’s high academic standards should be a source of great satisfaction and pride. The General Studies director and advisors, University faculty and I are very much impressed by your accomplishment,” she added.

Aside from full tuition, monthly stipend, and board and lodging, Marlito’s grant would allow him to come home to the Philippines every year.

When he finishes his course in Northeastern, he must work for at least two years in a Filipino company as part of the contract with ICTSI. 🍀

"I want change and I want my tribesmen not to be ashamed of their origins."



Marlito with his many awards

Photo credits: choosephilippines.com

EYES WIDE OPEN



Sitting (L-R): Assistant Secretary Aleli B. Bawagan (IMC Vice Chair), Assistant Secretary Jose Antonio R. Hernandez, Secretary Judy M. Taguiwalo (IMC Chair) and Undersecretary Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa.

Standing (L-R): Angelie E. Lasprillas and Ma. Hazel Joy A. Ladrera (IMC secretariat members), Bella Aurora C. Asuncion (Graft & Prevention Investigation Officer, Office of the Ombudsman), Janeth Decipulo-Ladia (IMC secretariat member), Dir. Natividad V. Canlas (IMC-secretariat Head), and Rodante G. Dulay (IMC secretariat member).

There is a saying – “The eyes are the windows to the soul.”

But for internal auditors, their eyes are also their windows towards the improvement of the organization’s processes and operations.

To Dir. Natividad V. Canlas, a seasoned auditor and currently the Officer-in-Charge of DSWD-Internal Audit Service (IAS), while it is imperative for DSWD to maintain its “heart” for the poor through its *maagap at mapagkalingang serbisyo* (prompt and compassionate service), it is also vital for DSWD to have an eagle eye for the Department’s processes and systems, ensuring internal controls are in place, thus, resulting in the decrease of corruption risks.

“Ang mga mata ng publiko ay nakatutok sa atin ngayon lalo pa’t madiin ang posisyon ng ating pangulo laban sa korapsyon. Kaya hamon sa atin ang pagkakaroon ng mas malinaw na pagtingin sa mga proseso at sistema ng DSWD. Na lahat ng ating mga aktibidad ay alinsunod sa batas (The eyes of the public are on us especially that the president has a strong stand against corruption. The challenge is for us to have a clearer view on the Department’s processes and systems. That all our activities are within the bounds of the law),” Dir. Canlas explained.

Some of the audit engagements the IAS has worked on in the past months include the Operations Audit on Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA) implementation at FO 6, Management Audit on the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) at FO 12, Social Pension (SP) Program implementation at FO 3 and the Special Audit Report on the Receipt and Utilization of Yolanda-Donated Funds and Emergency and Core Shelter Assistance Program (E/CSA) implementation at FO 6 and Validation Audit for Philippine Red Cross (PRC) Rice Assistance Program.

During these engagements, the internal auditors need to be keen and meticulous to be able to see if there are irregularities in the transactions, if the beneficiaries really received the appropriate assistance and if the public funds were utilized judiciously for the appropriate purpose.

However, audit engagements happen only every after a certain program was implemented. The need to have proactive measures to prevent corruption is essential especially for a frontline agency such as DSWD.

To address this matter, the Department is implementing its Integrity Management Program (IMP), the flagship national corruption prevention

“Kaya hamon sa atin ang pagkakaroon ng mas **malinaw** na pagtingin sa mga **proseso at sistema** ng DSWD. Na lahat ng ating mga aktibidad ay **alinsunod sa batas.**”

program of the government. The program aims to promote integrity-building in the Department with the emphasis on the importance of risk assessment and risk management in corruption-prevention.

To better prepare and engage the new officials of the Department, an Executive Briefing for the program was conducted on October 13, 2016 which was attended by the new members of the Execom and by Atty. Evelyn A. Baliton of the Office of the Ombudsman. IMC Chair Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo expressed her support in this anti-corruption campaign especially that DSWD has maintained its good standing in the previous anti-corruption programs of the government.

With the presence of these programs and audit activities, the Department proves its earnest commitment to further promote transparency and accountability. However, the fight against corruption can never be won only by the top officials of the Department. The support and participation of the whole DSWD community is significant to operationalize one of its thrusts and priorities – *Tapat na Paglilingkod na Walang Puwang sa Katiwalian* (sincere service which has no room for corruption), a DSWD not just with a heart, but with eyes wide open. 🇵🇭



Internal Auditor Jerry D. Cabili interviewed a resident of Calbayog City, Samar during the conduct of validation for the Philippine Red Cross Rice Assistance Program

CHAPTER 2:

Serving with Compassion

Pagmamalasakit

THE DAWN OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE



“KUMUSTAHAN” WITH PARTNER BENEFICIARIES

T rue to its mandate of providing prompt and genuine service to the poor, the DSWD has embarked on a nationwide ‘Kumustahan’ of its program beneficiaries, particularly those enrolled under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

As part of the ‘Kumustahan’, DSWD officials, led by Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo, have been visiting the poorest areas in different parts of the country. The aim of the activity is for DSWD officials as well as rank and file employees to see for themselves the situation faced by the country’s poorest sectors. This is to enable DSWD staff and officials to be better equipped at re-aligning the agency’s programs and services so they will be more responsive to the needs of beneficiaries. It is also a way to bring the DSWD closer to poor communities and encourage all DSWD employees to work with the poor in efforts to address their immediate needs against poverty. The DSWD’s main rallying call is *Maagap at Mapagkalingang Serbisyo* (Prompt and

“Social work is all about serving the poor and responding to their needs with the goal to help them become empowered.”



compassionate service)” for the poor and the rest of the Filipino people.

A ‘Kumustahan’ was led by DSWD Secretary herself, during her two-day visit in the CARAGA Region on December 14-15. The welfare chief personally interviewed a number of 4Ps beneficiaries at Brgy. Mambalili in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur and at Brgy. San Vicente in Butuan City.

Other DSWD officials also visited other poor areas of the country. Usec. for Special Concerns Virginia Orogo held a ‘Kumustahan’ of 4Ps beneficiaries in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, while Usec. for Operations and Promotive Programs Ma. Lourdes Turalde visited poor families in Brgy. Niño Jesus in Libon, Albay with Dir. Arnel B. Garcia of FO 5.

Meanwhile, Asec. for Special Concerns Jose Antonio R. Hernandez and his team met with 4Ps beneficiaries in South Cotabato. Usec. for Institutional Development Group (IDG) Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa, on the other hand, conducted ‘Kumustahan’ in Brgys. Magtuod and Bucana in Davao City with Asst. Bureau Dir. Leah Mejias and Region 11 Dir. Mercedita Jabagat.



From December 9-23, the DSWD has visited a total of 216 households in the 18 regions of the country for the nationwide pilot-testing of its tool for the “Malawakang Kumustahan Project”.

According to Sec. Taguiwalo, it is important for officials and employees of the DSWD to personally visit the poor and not just wait for reports in the office.

This way, they will have a better understanding of the situation poor families face everyday, enabling them to further improve the Department’s programs and services to assist the underprivileged. ❤️



Pakikisalamuha

BRIDGING THE GAPS, BRINGING DSWD CLOSER TO THE POOR, VULNERABLE AND DISADVANTAGED

OFF-SITE RELEASE OF SERVICES TO FURTHER PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY FOR BENEFICIARIES

To further make its services more accessible to those who need them, the agency issued Memorandum Circular (MC) 11 titled “DSWD Off-Site Serbisyo: Special Guidelines on Off-Site Release or Provision of Services to Beneficiaries of DSWD Protective Services Program (PSP). In MC 11, the DSWD policy of releasing funds or providing assistance to beneficiaries under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) component of the PSP within the DSWD offices or premises is reiterated.

“Because the Department considers issues of convenience when it comes to the beneficiaries’ access to the said services --- as well as the need to ensure a safe, orderly, and cost-efficient implementation of the PSP – a mechanism will be implemented and called “DSWD Off-Site Serbisyo,” Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo said.

DSWD Off-Site Serbisyo refers to off-site release or provision of assistance to DSWD pre-qualified beneficiaries outside DSWD offices or premises for the convenience of the beneficiaries. These include

cash-for-work, educational assistance, and cash or guarantee letters for medical assistance and burial assistance to PSP beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries of the program are individuals who are indigent, vulnerable, disadvantaged or those in the informal sector, and other sectors who are in crisis situation based on assessment of the Social Workers of the Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) of DSWD Central Office (CO) and Field Offices (FOs), Social Welfare and Development (SWAD) Teams and/or DSWD satellite offices.

In the Memorandum Circular, the term “DSWD Offices” refers to the DSWD CO, FOs, SWAD satellite offices and other offices where DSWD social workers and/or personnel habitually hold office in the performance of their regular functions.

“Because the Department considers issues of **convenience** when it comes to the beneficiaries’ access to the said services...a mechanism will be implemented and called **‘DSWD Off-Site Serbisyo.’**”

The Special Guidelines were issued pursuant to DSWD MC 9, s. 2016 or the Supplementary Guidelines on the Implementation of PSP, specifically Section V.2 clarifying when and how release of the AICS may be made outside DSWD offices or premises.

“We have to make it clear that off-site release will be resorted to only when it’s seen that on-site payment or release results or tends to result to inconvenience to beneficiaries or that it is impractical or not cost-efficient. We are issuing these guidelines in response to concerns that it will not always be easy for our beneficiaries to go to the DSWD FOs. We want to make the process of accessing DSWD PSP services as easy and as convenient as possible for our beneficiaries,” Sec. Taguiwalo said.

The Off-Site Serbisyo locations will be determined by the RDs or their duly authorized representatives in their respective jurisdictions and will include any of the following: public schools, barangay halls, Day Care Centers, multi-purpose halls and covered courts. The venue of location will put primary consideration to the safety and well-being of the beneficiaries and DSWD service providers. 🇵🇭



Maagap

COMMITTED TO SERVE: PROVIDING PROMPT, DEPENDABLE, AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICE IN TIMES OF DISASTER



DISASTER RESPONSE

From Tropical Depression (TD) 'Ambo' to Typhoon (TY) 'Nina,' a total of fourteen tropical cyclones hit the country in 2016. The DSWD responded by ensuring the availability of relief resources for disaster-affected families, mobilized quick response teams (QRTs), and provided augmentation support to local government units (LGUs).

To continually improve and strengthen its disaster response operations, the Department through its Disaster Response Assistance and Management Bureau (DReAMB) launched in August its Emergency Operations Center for Disaster Response and its online version, the Virtual Operations Center (VOC) microsite available via the Internet. The online facility makes information on



A screenshot of the Virtual Operations Center

the DSWD's disaster preparedness and response efforts available to the general public, facilitating transparency and good governance.



With a plethora of lessons learned from Typhoon Yolanda that hit the country in 2013, the Department also reinforced this year the prepositioning of family food packs at the local level to ensure that there are enough resources whenever a disaster strikes. It also strengthened even more its coordination with LGUs especially during the pre-emptive evacuation of residents in critical and low-lying areas and the provision of relief assistance to victims of disasters.

As of December 31, 2016, the Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center reported that from TD Butchoy to TY Nina, DSWD has provided a total of P289,060,784.35 worth of relief resources consisting of food and non-food items.

Apart from emergency relief, DSWD provided Emergency Shelter Assistance to the victims with damaged houses due to typhoons. For Super Typhoon (STY) Lawin, the DSWD implemented the Emergency Shelter Cash Assistance Program (ESCAP). As of December 29, 2016, a total 108,647 households have already received the initial ESCAP at P5,000 each amounting to P543,235,000.



A DSWD FO staff facilitated the ESCAP distribution in Batanes for Typhoon Ferdie victims

The DSWD continues to assess and distribute the ESCAP to all assessed victims of the STY and has established the e-reklamo complaints management system to ensure the quality of the service for the victims.

Aside from providing assistance to affected families of natural calamities, the DSWD also extended aid to families and individuals affected by man-made disasters. The Department provided P4,094,030 worth of relief assistance and P2,110,500 worth of cash aid to families and individuals who lost their homes due to a fire that razed Blocks 35 and 36 in Brgy. Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City. It also extended care and recovery assistance to the victims of the bombing incident in Davao City in August.



DSWD officials visited victims of Davao bombing



Affected families of El Niño were given assistance

The DSWD also extended aid to farmers affected by the onslaught of the El Niño phenomenon in Region 7 and in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the form of rice subsidies and through its cash-for-work program.

Affected families of armed conflict were also assisted through the provision of food packs and conduct of stress debriefing sessions. The Lumads who were displaced due to armed conflict were assisted in returning to their ancestral lands.

The DSWD continues its leadership in disaster response by ensuring that immediate relief and early recovery services are provided to victims of disasters through "maagap at mapagkalingang serbisyo" (prompt and caring service).

Matapat

GENUINE SERVICE TO THE NATION: FACING THE CHALLENGES WITH TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY

One of the priorities of Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo for her first 100 days in office was to review the status of donations and other funds that the Department received for its relief and rehabilitation efforts for 'Yolanda' survivors. She received numerous complaints from various individuals and organizations regarding their negative experiences with DSWD during the distribution of relief goods as well as during the recovery and rehabilitation period.

On August 12, Sec. Taguiwalo and other senior officials of DSWD had a dialogue with 'Yolanda' survivors in Iloilo City. A research team was organized to find out the issues and concerns related to the DSWD's recovery and rehabilitation programs.



"The research is by no means very extensive as it was initiated only by the Office of the Secretary," Asec. Aleli Bawagan said.

According to her, the field research in DSWD FOs 6 and 8 were prioritized since they received the highest amount of funds for 'Yolanda' programs.

The research looked into the following recovery and rehabilitation programs: distribution of emergency shelter assistance (ESA); construction of transition homes and core shelters; other programs which were implemented from the donations; and, Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services-National Community Driven Development Project (KC-NCDDP) sub-projects.

"It was very disappointing to see how three years later, only 33% of all the core shelters of the DSWD for the 'Yolanda' survivors were built. It was shameful because we are all aware of how much the survivors have already suffered during and after Typhoon Yolanda, and yet we were unable to provide what was promised them – safe houses they can rest in as they try to recover from the extreme stress and trauma they suffered. Many of them lost their loved ones; most of them lost all they have worked for until the typhoon struck. The least that should have been done to help them was to ensure that they have safe and comfortable houses; we failed to do this," she said.



Delays in construction for the core shelter projects were due to the following:

- Local government units have not been able to secure their counterpart lots for relocation;
- Cash-for-work allocated by DSWD is not enough; some families need to work to earn daily income and hence, are not able to focus on their house construction;
- Since some of the relocation areas are quite far from the town proper, suppliers are hesitant to bid for the project since the funds allocated are not sufficient, considering increase in hauling expenses due to the distance to be covered for delivery;
- Competition for construction supplies and labor among various agencies (National Housing Authority, DSWD, NGOs and private corporations) which are simultaneously implementing infrastructure projects.

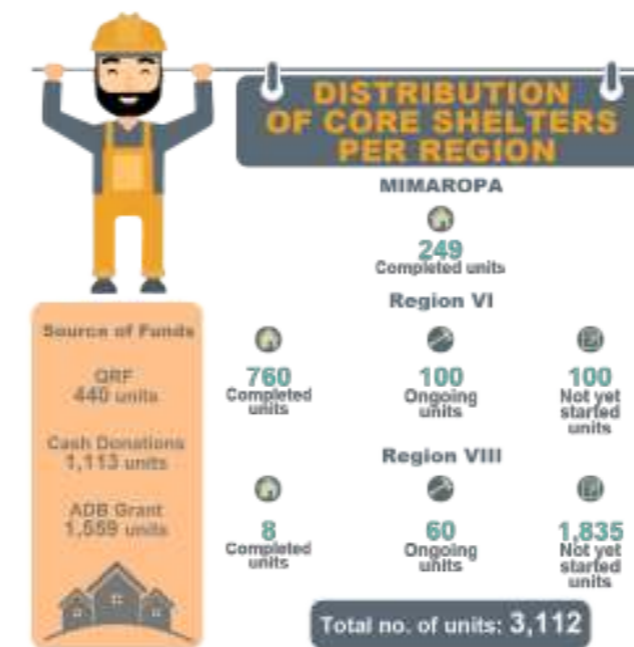
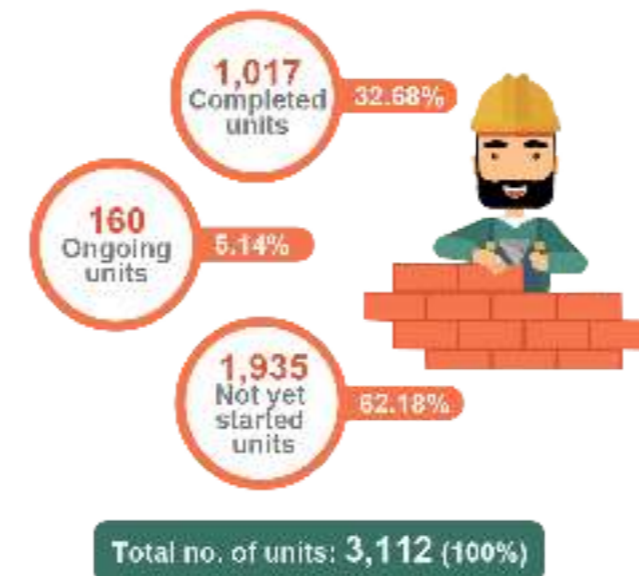


Other major findings from the study are as follows:

a. There were discrepancies between the project proposals and the actual implementation such as: boat garage construction and core shelter project in Guiuan, Eastern Samar; and, transition shelters in Leyte, Eastern and Western Samar;

b. There are still many complaints regarding the distribution of Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA) for Typhoon Yolanda survivors. Some of the complaints were: exclusion of eligible beneficiaries; inclusion of ineligible individuals; and receipt of insufficient ESA.

STATUS OF CONSTRUCTION OF CORE SHELTERS As of August 15, 2016



These findings were brought to the attention of President Duterte. On the third anniversary of 'Yolanda' on November 8, 2016, he announced that he will provide P5,000 financial assistance to those who were not able to receive ESA. This will be completed in June 2017.

Moreover, clarifications have been made with the implementing partners regarding the discrepancies noted in the research. DSWD asked for the return of unused funds. The LGUs have likewise prepared their catch up plans for the completion of core shelters.

Based on this study, Sec. Taguiwalo has requested for a review of the core shelter projects which the Department has implemented, specially in areas affected by Typhoons Sendong and Pablo as well as the Bohol earthquake.



'Yolanda' survivors showed Asec. Bawagan the site for their core shelters



Sec. Taguiwalo and Guiuan, Eastern Samar Mayor Gonzales visited an affected family in their transition home

"It was shameful because we are all aware of how much the survivors have already suffered during and after Typhoon Yolanda, and yet we were unable to provide for what was promised them."



Asec. Bawagan visited 'Yolanda' affected families to assess the programs and services provided to them

Mapagkalinga

A CARING HEART: RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF PWDs



"We have to recognize that the **benefits and privileges** are reflective of the rights of persons with disabilities that should be respected and upheld as a means to promote **equality in society**."

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR EMPOWERED PWDs

The DSWD reiterated that PWDs can already avail of the benefits under Republic Act 10754, also known as An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons With Disability (PWDs).

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the law which outlines how the benefits are to be implemented was signed on December 1 by the DSWD, Department of Health (DOH), and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA).

Following the signing on December 1 and the publication of the IRR on December 8 in two major national newspapers, availment of the privileges commenced on December 23.

The DSWD also explained that there is no need for supplemental guidelines from implementing agencies because the law and the IRR are sufficient to grant the discount to PWDs.

"We have to recognize that the benefits and privileges are reflective of the rights of persons with disabilities that should be respected and upheld as a means to promote equality in society." Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo said.

NCDA is the lead agency in the implementation of the law. It is located at Isidora St., Brgy. Holy Spirit, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 951-6033 or 952-2809.

Benefits and privileges

The IRR of R.A. 10754 grants PWDs exemption from Value Added Tax (VAT), on the purchase of certain goods and services from all establishments subject to VAT for their exclusive use, enjoyment, or availment. This is on top of the 20% discount they are already entitled to under R.A. 9442, also known as An Act Amending R.A. No. 7277, otherwise

known as the "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, and for Other Purposes."

The act covers restaurants, recreation centers, such as theaters, cinema houses, and concert halls, and lodging establishments such as inns, motorist hotels, and dormitories. It also applies to the purchase of medicines and food for special medical purposes, medical and dental services, including laboratory fees and professional fees of attending doctors, domestic air, sea, and land transportation travel, and funeral and burial services.

For this purpose, the law requires all establishments to place signages of the benefits and privileges of persons with disability within their premises so PWDs will know what they are entitled to. It also declares that subsequent purchases made by the PWDs on the same day from the same establishment are still subject to VAT-exemption and 20% discount.

Other salient features of the law include reiteration of the right of PWDs to social insurance, educational assistance, special discounts in the purchase of goods, and express lanes in all establishments.

It also provides tax incentives for those caring for and living with PWDs up to the fourth degree of affinity or consanguinity.

Moreover, the Act covers certain vitamins, minerals and herbs based on the Food and Drug Administration's cutoff, as well as food for special medical purposes.

Likewise, it makes the benefits and privileges available to Filipinos who hold foreign passports but are registered as dual citizens and those who have reacquired their Filipino citizenship.

"Also equally important to point out is that these benefits and privileges are the result of the determined, sustained, and united campaign of PWD organizations, associations, and groups to educate the public of their plight. They organize themselves, and initiate mass actions jointly with the other sectors of society that support their efforts. Our duty as public servants is mainly to enable them so they can build better lives for themselves and become productive citizens of society," Sec. Taguiwalo said. 🇵🇭

Paggalang sa mga Nakatatanda

GIVING THEM TRIBUTE IN THEIR TWILIGHT



Pres. Rodrigo R. Duterte with (L-R) DSWD Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo, DOH Sec. Paulyn Jean B. Rosell-Ubial, CWC Exec. Dir. Patricia B. Luna, and DILG Sec. Ismael D. Sueno bestowed a Letter of Felicitation and a Centenarian gift worth P100,000 to the eldest Filipino centenarian, Lourdes Marquez

DSWD Sec. Judy M. Taguiwalo helped lead the signing of the IRR of the Centenarians Act of 2016 on September 26, 2016.

The Centenarians Act covers Filipinos who have reached 100 years old, whether residing in the Philippines or abroad. They will receive official recognition from the President for their longevity, and a Centenarian Gift. The law also declares the first Sunday of October of every year as National Respect for Centenarians Day.

“The IRR is a product of hard work. It went through a long series of consultations with various government agencies and civil society organizations. The IRR contains the provisions on the Centenarian Gift to be given to Filipinos residing in and outside the country, in recognition of the longevity of their lives. Funds will come from the DSWD. The Centenarian Gift will be accompanied by a Letter of Felicitation from the President of the Philippines. Posthumous awards will be given to deceased centenarians. Additional cash gifts will also be given by local government units, with due consideration to any local ordinance granting similar incentives for centenarians,” Sec. Taguiwalo said.

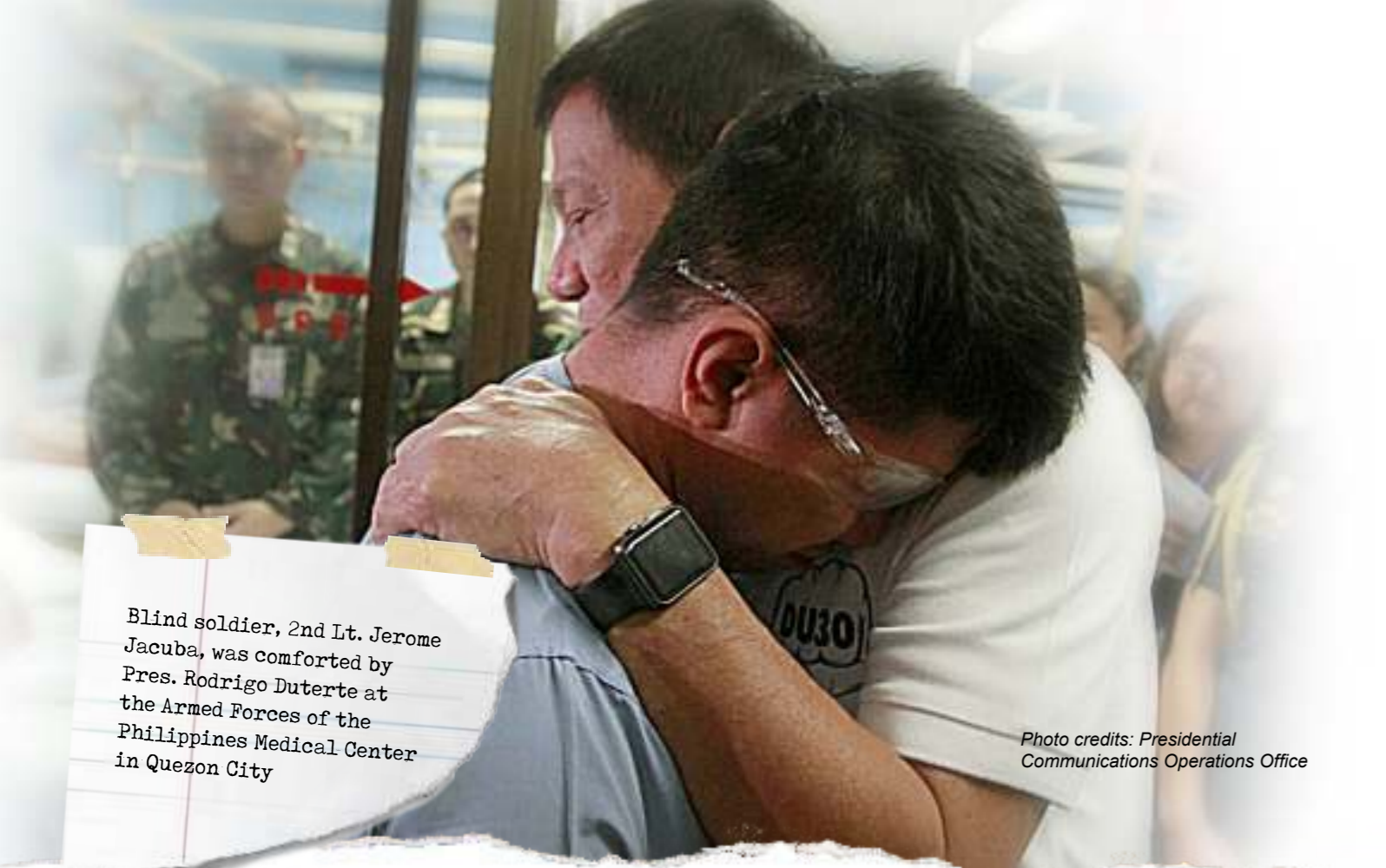
To fulfill the promise of the law, careful consideration had to be given to the documentary requirements.

“We all know that many of our elderly were born decades before us and may not always have birth certificates, much less passports. This situation often holds true even for those who have been recently born, especially those from remotest areas. We also do not want them to stand in queues and then fail to be recognized because of the absence of legal documents that some of them may never have had,” Sec. Taguiwalo explained.

“As such, the IRR provides that in the absence of birth certificates or passports, centenarians can submit other government issued documents as proof of their age. The Centenarians Act is a momentous legislation that we want to be actively enforced. Time is of the essence in implementing the law because we want the beneficiaries to enjoy the centenarian gift,” she added. 🇵🇭



“ **Time** is of the essence in implementing the law because we want the beneficiaries to **enjoy the centenarian gift** ”



Blind soldier, 2nd Lt. Jerome Jacuba, was comforted by Pres. Rodrigo Duterte at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center in Quezon City

Photo credits: Presidential Communications Operations Office

Kaisa sa Bayanihan

SALUTE TO OUR HEROES: UNWAVERING GRATITUDE FROM THE NATION

The DSWD has already begun to act on the instructions of Pres. Rodrigo Duterte to provide its counterpart assistance to the families of personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) who were killed and wounded in action (K/WIA).

According to Usec. Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa, the DSWD's Protective Services Fund Management Office has already forwarded the list of the K/WIA soldiers, including information on their dependents to the DSWD Field Offices (FOs) where the soldiers' families live. The families will be subjected to assessment and eligibility to the various programs of the DSWD, not only the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

"We have an existing system to deliver the most apt and suitable services for the dependents of the K/WIA soldiers. This system is implemented through the swift coordination between the DSWD CO and

FOs. DSWD-FO social workers in the regions where the soldiers' dependents live will conduct home visits to determine their needs and assess what services and interventions can be provided to them," Usec. Ancheta-Templa said. "At the onset, the assistance that we can immediately provide are educational, livelihood, and employment opportunities through skills training for the dependents. If the soldiers have senior citizen parents, we can enroll them in the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens," Usec. Ancheta-Templa pointed out.

Social workers from the Department conducted home visits to the soldiers and their families for possible counselling, medical, financial and other appropriate services according to their needs.

As of September 13, 2016, they have already visited 53 out of the 95 families of K/WIA soldiers. The families are from the National Capital Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, Regions 1, 2, 3,

MIMAROPA, 5, 6, 10, 12, and the Negros Island Region.

The social workers continue to locate the other families in their declared addresses.

Most of the evaluated soldiers were recommended for livelihood, extended financial and medical assistance, and inclusion to DSWD's programs such as the Social Pension Program for Indigent Senior Citizens for their parents.

The DSWD's Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) has given initial financial assistance which covers educational, transportation, medical and food subsidy of the soldiers and their dependents.

If deemed necessary, the Department is ready to provide more resources to them as directed by Sec. Taguiwalo.

"Almost all of the soldiers assessed by our social workers lack the resources for daily subsistence because their salaries are not enough to sustain the needs of their families. DSWD is ready to provide extended aid to them. However, what we really want is a just and lasting peace to prevent any social injustice and where people's rights are protected and promoted," Sec. Taguiwalo said.

Cases of wounded soldiers

Sgt. Bernardo Oganía was extended free hospitalization, P10,000 cash assistance, and a netbook from the President. His daughter, Brendel, a fourth year college student, was given educational assistance of P5,000 which was released on August 26, 2016.

On the other hand, Rachel, wife of 2Lt. Jerome Jacuba from Region VI, was provided with transportation assistance so she can visit her husband in the hospital.



2nd Lt. Jerome Jacuba and his family



The President talked with wounded soldiers in Nalacang on National Heroes Day.

Upon completion of requirements, Cpl. Philip Engada will be provided medical assistance amounting to P5,000 by DSWD 6 and P2,000 by the local government unit thru the Municipal Social Welfare Development Office (MSWDO).

A referral letter addressed to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) was also provided by the DSWD FO 10 for a possible scholarship grant for Sgt. Christopher Balmocena's brother. Sgt. Balmocena, 31, also has a 56-year old mother who is asking to be enrolled in the DSWD's livelihood program.

In September 2016, DSWD FO 12 has addressed the needs of three soldiers and their respective families.

PFC Chris Joh Figueroa from Sultan Kudarat was wounded on July 16, 2016 in an operation against a group alleged to be selling drugs in Midsayap, North Cotabato. He was taken to Camp Siongco Clinic and Hospital in Awang, Cotabato City. He is married but he and his wife are childless.

The DSWD FO 12 provided counselling to the family and referred their case to the MSWDO of Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat. The family is set to be provided with financial assistance amounting to P15,000 as support for their plan to establish a small hog raising business in their community. Figueroa's parents are farmers.

CPL Alvin Nicolas was wounded in battle against members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on August 26, 2016. He supports his mother Florentina who works as a laundry woman earning only P2,500 a month. When

Alvin was wounded, he was flown to Manila for confinement and treatment, but his family members were unable to visit him because they had no money for air fare. The DSWD FO is providing Florentina with P15,000 as financial assistance so she can see her son.

CPL Eric Jules Oriel was one of the soldiers wounded on July 19, 2016 in Compostela Valley. He was confined at Panacan District Hospital in Davao. He and his wife Jennelyn have two children. Jennelyn will be provided with financial assistance of P10,000 to augment the supplies of her sari-sari store. The two children, who are both in grade school, will be provided with educational assistance of P2,500.

"The different forms of assistance the DSWD FOs have given to the families of the wounded soldiers are not considerable, but these will at least help them in their income generating efforts. Our social workers visited each of the homes of the soldiers and saw that they were all from poor economic backgrounds, and that they became soldiers primarily, to have a means to fight off poverty so that they can provide for their families. We explained to them the programs and services of the DSWD so they can, in the future, access more of them based on their needs and as soon as they can provide the requirements of the programs," Sec. Taguiwalo said. 🇷🇵

"We explained to them the programs and services of the DSWD so they can, in the future, access more of them based on their needs and as soon as they can provide the requirements of the programs."



Cpl. Philip Engada will be provided medical assistance by DSWD FO 6



"Handa ang Departamento na tumulong sa inyo, kung ano ang mga serbisyo at programang meron ang DSWD, ang mga ito ay available para sa inyo."

Tumatanaw ng Utang na Loob

NO PLACE LIKE HOME: REUNITING OFs WITH THEIR FAMILIES

The DSWD was part of the Duterte Government's Humanitarian Mission to assist stranded Overseas Filipinos (OFs) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia dubbed as "Operation Bring them Home".

The DSWD team was led by Social Welfare Attaché Office (SWATO) Officer-In-Charge (OIC) Perlita V. Pangniban with Usec. for Operations and Programs Group (OPG) Vilma Cabrera and Asec. Hope V. Hervilla.

Some 141 OFs who were among those stranded in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed their joy and gratitude to the Philippine Government as they arrived on September 5, 2016 via Saudi Arabia Airlines SV 804 flight at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1.

They were met by Exec. Sec. Salvador Medialdea with Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Sec. Silvestre Bello III, and DSWD Usec. Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa, among others.

Addressing the OFs, Usec. Ancheta-Templa said that DSWD's services and programs are available and accessible to the repatriated workers.

She added, "Handa ang Departamento na tumulong sa inyo, kung ano ang mga serbisyo at programang meron ang DSWD, ang mga ito ay available para sa inyo. Ang ating mga social workers ay gagawa ng assessment (The Department is ready to help you with whatever service and program that the DSWD has. Our social workers will assess your needs)."

Usec. Ancheta-Templa stressed that the OFs may drop by the Field Offices of DSWD in their respective areas so that a social worker can immediately assess them.

Rene Rojas, 44, who hails from Cagayan de Oro City, shared that he had been with Saudi Oger as a construction worker since 2013. He has not received a single payment since January 2016.

He said, "Masaya kami at nakauwi na kami dahil para kaming mga preso doon. Nagpapasalamat kami sa gobyerno at natulungan kami (We are glad that we are now home because we were like prisoners there. We also thank the government for helping us)."

Another worker, Ariel Reyes, affirmed what Rojas said and added, "Unang beses ito na ang iba't-ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno ay nagsama-sama para tulungan kaming mga nagkaroon ng labor dispute. Ginagawa lang nila kasi ang tulong na ito dati kapag may giyera (This is the first time that different agencies of government came together to help the OFs who are caught in labor dispute. Repatriation was done by government only in times of war)."

Asked on what assistance he wants, he hopes that the government can help him and his fellow OFs get their back wages and benefits.

He added that it would also help them if they would be given work more than just financial assistance. "Mas maganda kung matulungan kaming magkatrabaho para mapaghirapan din namin ang kita. Pag financial assistance kasi madaling maubos (It would be best if government can help us find work so that we will not just depend on the assistance. Financial aid sometimes runs out fast)," Reyes said.

Likewise, Benjamin Soriano Hipolito, who hails from Sta. Maria Bulacan, worked for eight years in Saudi Oger as a fiber glass technician. He said the company owed him around 38,000 Rials and it would greatly help his family if the government can assist him in claiming his back salaries and other benefits.

He added, "Madaming utang ang pamilya ko. 'Yung iba kong anak nahinto na sa pag-aaral. Okay din sana kung matulungan kami sa financial o sa paghahanap ng trabaho (My family has already incurred debts. Some of my children have stopped going to school. I hope they can help us with our financial needs or in finding new job)."

On the other hand, Redel Lacaba, one of the victims of illegal recruitment, expressed his appreciation for the fast and efficient response of DSWD in assisting victims who are in need.

"Kahit mabigat ang kalooban ko dahil niloko ako ng illegal recruiter, nakakagaan sa pakiramdam na mayroon tayong gobyerno na may malasakit sa tao. Ang laki ng pasasalamat ko sa DSWD (Even though I feel bad about being fooled by an illegal recruiter, I am still relieved to know that our government cares for the people. I am really grateful to DSWD)," Lacaba said.

OFs reached

The DSWD Team served a total of 9,476 OFs from different companies such as Saudi Bin Laden Group, Saudi Oger, Mohammad Al-Mojil (MMG), and various sub-contracting companies. Of the total number of served clients, 4,147 (44%) are from Jeddah, 3,588 (38%) are from Riyadh, and 1,741 (18%) are from Al Khobar/Dammam.



Usec. Ancheta-Templa welcomes OFs



OIC-SWATO Pangniban briefed the media about the status of stranded OFs



Sec. Taguiwalo shared a solidarity lunch with tribal groups' leaders

Kaagapay sa Maunlad na Bukas

SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On October 20, 2016, officials of the DSWD had a consultation dialogue with leaders of various organizations of indigenous people's (IPs) groups led by the Cordillera People's Alliance and Kasalo Caraga at the University of the Philippines during the 2016 *Lakbayan ng Pambansang Minorya Para sa Sariling Pagpapasya at Makatarungang Kapayapaan*.

During the consultation dialogue, leaders of the various minority groups expressed their common concerns and grievances which include lack of support from the previous administrations which translated into lack of basic social services, such as health, education, infrastructure, electricity, employment, and livelihood opportunities.

They also aired their protest over continued exploitation and encroachment of their ancestral lands by local and foreign entities, which built dams,

mines, plantations and other establishments in their communities, shutting out the tribal groups.

The leaders said that they travelled from Mindanao to other parts of the Philippines *"Para malaman ng pamahalaan at aming mga kababayan ang aming mga hinaing* (So the government and our countrymen will be aware of our grievances)."

Tatay Alberto, a Subanen from Zamboanga Peninsula lamented, *"Sa loob ng mahabang panahon nagpalit-palit na ang mga presidente, ay hindi umayos ang kalagayan ng aming kabuhatan, kalusugan at edukasyon* (For a long time presidents have changed but our lives, livelihood, health and education have not improved)."

"Patuloy ang pagkamkam sa aming mga lupang ninuno (There is continued grabbing of our ancestral lands)," he continued.

The IPs also decried militarization of their communities.

"Kami ay inaakusahan ng military na mga NPA, ginagawang CAFGU ang iba naming mga katribu at pinag-aaway-away kami (The military accuses us of being NPAs, they organize some of our tribesmen into CAFGUs and instigate us to fight against each other)," Tatay Alberto continued.

Tatay Alberto also expressed their support to President Duterte's Independent Foreign Policy.

"Nais din naming mapaalis ang mga sundalong Amerikano dahil sila din ang tumutulong mag-organisa sa mga CAFGU na nagresulta sa kaguluhan sa aming mga komunidad (We want the American soldiers to leave because they also help organize the CAFGUs resulting to chaos in our communities)," he said.

On the other hand, Tatay Danny, spokesperson of KASALO Caraga stated that outsiders dictate the prices of their products. Since they have to travel seven kilometers from their villages to the nearest town market, their products are often wilted or spoiled and they cannot command good prices.

"Ang mga produkto namin gaya ng mais at saging ay madalas sira na pagdating sa bayan. Kailangan namin ng maayos na daan para mapabilis ang pagdadala namin ng mga produkto namin sa pamilihan (Our products like corn and bananas often get spoiled by the time we reach the town proper. We need good farm-to-market roads so we can transport our produce to the market with ease)," he added.

He also appealed that their children who finished school be given jobs.

Abuses against women and children

Meanwhile, Tatay Andres from Cordillera said that it was good that the DSWD was making efforts to improve its service delivery to those affected by calamities. He enumerated the various abuses of the military against women and children of their communities. He also said that the military also use children as spies and disrespected their rituals and traditions.

"Sana maging maagap ang pagtugon ng DSWD at lokal na pamahalaan sa mga kaso ng pang-aabuso sa aming mga kababaihan at mga bata (What we need is DSWD and local government's prompt response to the cases of abuse against our women and children)," he emphasized.

For her part, Sec. Taguiwalo assured the minority groups of the Department's continued support.

Earlier, the Secretary and other DSWD officials and employees participated in a solidarity lunch with the tribal groups' leaders.

"Patuloy namin kayong susuportahan sa inyong adhikain na magkaroon ng tunay na kaunlaran at kapayapaan (We shall continue to support your aspiration for real progress and peace)," Sec Taguiwalo stressed.

The dialogue concluded with a solidarity pledge among the DSWD officials and employees and the minority groups. 🇷🇵





Pagyakap sa Bayan

EMPOWERING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TO WIN THE WAR AGAINST ILLEGAL DRUGS

A message of hope, support, and recovery.

This is what DSWD Asec. Jose Antonio Hernandez says as he makes his rounds in different communities of the urban poor such as those in Legazpi City.

Based on the records of the Legazpi City Police Station, as of October 18, 2016, some 2,467 drug dependents (2,326 males and 141 females) voluntarily surrendered to local authorities. Some 62 surrenderers are minors. In the meantime, among all the drug surrenderers, 271 are pushers and 2,196 are drug users.

The drug pushers will be under PNP's disposition, but the rest will be encouraged to enter the programs of the government's other agencies such as the DSWD, the Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Asec. Hernandez said that the DSWD will work with LGUs to strengthen the capacities of urban poor communities in the fight against illegal drugs and drug abuse by empowering community leaders and offering alternatives to community members, particularly those who belong to age groups that are vulnerable to drug abuse.

"There is a need to reduce the factors in communities that increase the risk of drug abuse and promote the factors that minimize the risks. The goal is to build the capacities of leaders and people's organizations so they can act as positive agents in their communities," he said.

Asec. Hernandez has been officially designated as the DSWD's focal person when it comes to the anti-drug campaign. Specifically, he is the lead official in implementing the DSWD's role in the Duterte administration's campaign to rehabilitate surrenderers and former users/pushers. DSWD has a role in the administration's program Pillar III: Aftercare, Reintegration and Transformation Support for Recovering Drug Dependents. As such, the DSWD will work together with the Presidential

Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) in pursuing the same goals.

Under the Pillar III, the Cash-for-Work (CFW) otherwise known as the Assistance to Communities in Need of the Protective Services, AICS, and the SLP are recommended to be funded to provide assistance to the recovering drug dependents along with other psychosocial programs of the Department and other programs of other agencies.

Asec. Hernandez said that the Philippines' drug problem has to be addressed through interventions that go to the root causes: poverty caused by lack of social support for many Filipinos; corruption in various levels in the different agencies of government, and lack of sustainable, productive employment for the poor.

"But we need to start at the beginning – in the communities, in the very areas where the drug problem takes root and endangers the lives and security of Filipinos," said Asec. Hernandez. "The DSWD's involvement in the anti-drug campaign is focused on strengthening families and communities to help them resist and fight against the scourge of illegal drugs. We have to help surrenderers and former users and pushers to return to the fold of society and work towards their own full recovery. We want them not only to be of full use to themselves and to their families, but to their communities as well. The DSWD fully extends all its programs to help surrenderers who have declared their willingness to become part of the government's efforts to help them," he said.

"Gusto nating bigyan ng pag-asa ang mga kababayan nating nalulong sa bawal na gamot o sa pagtutulak nito na pwede pa silang tanggapin muli ng komunidad at maging mga kapaki-pakinabang na miyembro ng lipunan. Tutulong ang gobyerno ni Pangulong Duterte at ang DSWD sa pamamagitan ng mga programang pangkalusugan at pangkabuhayan para palakasin ang loob ng mga surrenderers na kaya pa nilang magsimula muli at magkaroon ng kinabukasang hindi nilason o sinira ng bawal na gamot," he further said. 📌

Bagong Buhay

TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR A SAFE AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITY

Leonie Buhion Belarmino, 51, is a recovered drug dependent from Zone 2, Bulan, Sorsogon. Leonie has three children, all of them boys. Sadly, his family has broken apart, as his former wife left him and has since formed a new family, taking their two sons with her. His eldest son, on the other hand, died in a vehicular accident. Leonie himself stays with his elderly father.

Realization and Intervention

Through his own efforts at fighting his addiction, Leonie was admitted to the Malinao Treatment and Rehabilitation Center. He said that his stay there made him see his life from a different perspective.

He became a model ward at the center, and was identified to become a member of the intervention group called the Strategy Toward Acceptance, Reintegration and Transformation (START), which was piloted in Bicol Region. It is one of the DSWD's programs which focuses on the reintegration of recovering drug dependents in the community.

START provides medical treatment and recovery by strengthening the spiritual aspect of recovering drug users like Leonie.

Leonie was given a cash grant amounting to P5,000 so he could improve his livelihood activities. From the grant, Leonie bought a motorized *banca* to use for his fishing activities. He also rented the boat to other fishermen and earned at least P500 per week. He proudly shared that from his buy and sell business and from his boat rental, he became financially stable. He has since been able to contribute to the immediate needs of his family and was able to send financial support to his two sons who remain with his ex-wife.

Leonie is now a strong partner in the DSWD's advocacy campaign to educate and prepare families and communities on the adverse effects of drugs. He is also actively involved in the promotion of family life enrichment activities, especially helping those who are recovering from drug dependency. 📌



Leonie Belarmino, recovered drug dependent, is now a strong partner of DSWD

"Pinanindigan ko ang pagiging isang mabuting ama. Inayos ko ang paghahanap-buhay. Pinilit kong talikuran ang paggamit ng droga."



CWC 1M Lapis KICKS - OFF Campaign

CHAPTER 3: *Caring for the Vulnerable*

The country celebrated the National Children's Month in November pursuant to Republic Act No. 10661, otherwise known as the "National Children's Month Act", series of 2015 with the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), DSWD, and National Youth Commission (NYC) as lead agencies.

The 2016 National Children's Month theme, "*Isulong: Kalidad na Edukasyon Para sa Lahat ng Bata!*", responds to Sustainability Development Goal (SDG) No. 4. Education plays an important role in helping children develop, reach their potentials, engage meaningfully, and build resilience. This means that ensuring education of a child promotes child protection by empowering them to build resiliency. Provision of quality and relevant education to girls and boys decreases their risks of becoming victims of violence.

The CWC kicked-off the celebration with the One Million Lapis campaign and the Guinness Book of World Record (GBWR) w/ Amalgamated Specialties Corporation (AMSPEC), SM Cares, Soroptomist International, & Landbank of the Philippines on November 5, 2016 at SM by the Bay, SM MOA, Pasay City. More than two thousand Filipino youth, ages 14-17 made history as they participated in the GBWR Longest Line of Pencils where they formed a pencil line of 858.76 meters, breaking the Staedtler Mars GmbH and Co. KG in Nuremberg, Germany's record of the longest line of pencils at 459.97

meters on August 5, 2015. Confirming the world-breaking feat were representatives from Armed Forces of the Philippines Brigadier General Jose Antonio Carlos Motril and Soroptomist International Congresswomen Linabelle Ruth Villarica, 4th District of Bulacan with Engineer Arnel Raios and Willie Nage from Land Registration Authority.

For the campaign One Million Lapis project, a total of 3,337,521 pencils were collected surpassing by three times the one-million target where majority of the pencils collected were from AMSPEC Corporation.

The CWC launched the One Million Lapis project to promote the child's right to education especially for children whose situations have impeded their chances to go to school. "Lapis" is a symbolic representation of the child's need to express ones ideas and feelings, be empowered through learning, in recognition of the importance of writing skills and materials.

A documentary report in 2012 reveals that in some far-flung villages, elementary students divide one "Lapis" into three to be able to write. This is just one of the pressing concerns of the students along with inadequate infrastructure and long distance travel from home to school. The project is a partnership of the National Government led by CWC and the Department of Education (DepEd) with SM Cares, National Bookstore, Soroptomist International of the

Philippines Region, Landbank of the Philippines and Enchanted Kingdom. It aims to gather Lapis/Pencils for the underprivileged students who lack the opportunity to pursue schooling.

The pencils collected from the campaign were given to under privileged elementary students in 4th and 5th class municipalities. The campaign aimed to raise awareness on the need to provide quality education for all Filipino children, especially those in far-flung and remote barangays.

Guests and VIPs who attended the event were AMSPEC Board Dir. Ms. Juanita Roco; SM Cares Vice-Pres for Special Projects and Operations Mr. Royston Cabunag; Soroptomist International Judy Gutierrez; DSWD Usec. Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa, Asec. Jose Antonio Hernandez, Dir. Pacita Sarino and DSWD MIMAROPA Dir. Wilma Naviamos, DepEd Usec. Alberto Muyot, Department of Agriculture (DA) Usec. Ranibai Dilangalen, Exec. Dir. Nielex Tupas of the NYC and P/Supt. Erickson Velasquez, Directorate for Police Community.

Media coverage were provided by NET 25, TV 5, UNTV, GMA 7, ABS-CBN and PTV4/Radyo ng Bayan. Journalists from various newspapers such as Philippine Star, Business Mirror, Manila Times, People's Journal, Manila Standard, Balita and Philippine Daily Inquirer. 📰

JJWC: LISTEN TO THEIR VOICES!

No to lowering of minimum age of criminal responsibility

May panukalang batas na naglalayong ibaba ang minimum age of criminal responsibility mula labinlima (15) pababa sa siyam (9) na taong gulang. Mahigpit itong tinututulan ng Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council sa pangunguna ng DSWD.

Mababasa ang ilan sa mga liham mula sa ilang kabataang tumutol sa nasabing panukalang batas.

Ako po ay humihiling na wag na po sana minyong ipasa sa kongreso ang panukalang tungkol sa pagbaba ng edad ng Criminal Responsibility sa siyam na taong gulang. Dahil my pag asa pa sila na mag bago. Dahil yung mga bata ay sila ang pag asa ng bayan. Ang mga bata mabilis matuto kung tuturuan sila ng mabuti at bigyan sila ng pag-asa ng ating kongreso.

Ako po ay si Julius labindalawang taong gulang. Nakatira po ako sa barangay Banaga porok Kawayan. Malaki ang pasasalamat ko na hindi na nabilanggo ang mga batang 15 at pababa dahil alam ko na alam nyo rin na may pag-asa pa ang mga batang kulang sa pag-aalaga ng mga magulang, isa rin akong child conflict with the law subalit dahil sa mga mambabatas ay nagkaroon ako ng pangalawang pagkakataon upang maitama ang aking buhay.

Masaya ako ngayon na ako'y nasa RRCY ng Guimaras dahil mas marani narin akong natutunan sa tinuturo nang aming ika dalawang ko ng mga magulang.

Pangarap ko pang balang araw ay maging isang HRM, nahiniwala po akong pakikilingan nyo ang aking samo dahil gusto nyo rin maginhawa ang ating kapaligiran. Maraming Salamat po

Lubas na gumagalang,
Julius

Dear Sirs,
Ako po ay humihiling na wag na po sana minyong ipasa sa kongreso ang panukalang tungkol sa pagbaba ng edad ng Criminal Responsibility sa siyam na taong gulang. Dahil my pag asa pa sila na mag bago. Dahil yung mga bata ay sila ang pag asa ng bayan. Ang mga bata mabilis matuto kung tuturuan sila ng mabuti at bigyan sila ng pag-asa ng ating kongreso.

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Lubas na gumagalang,
Julius



ICAB: Young orators champion legal adoption



(L-R): Department of Education (DepEd) Usec. for Partnerships and External Linkages, Mario A. Deriquito, Jona R. Mocam (2nd runner up), Joyce Ken Lei D. Daquio (1st runner up), Ena Francesca R. Cadayona (grand champion), and DSWD Protective Services Assistant Bureau Director, Rosalie D. Dagulo

For the finale of the 2016 Adoption Consciousness Week Celebration, 16 of the best young orators from all over the country participated in the Oratorical Contest Grand Finals and Awarding Ceremony on July 28, 2016 at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Department of Education (DepEd) Complex in Pasig City.

The event was a joint project of the DSWD and the DepEd to put the spotlight on the strong speaking skills of high school students and develop their understanding and appreciation on the importance of legal adoption.

Highlighting the theme, "Legal na Ampon Ako: Anak na Totoo (A Child Finds Worth in Legal Adoption)," the young orators were given seven to 10 minutes to persuade the judges on the significance of following the process of legal adoption and keeping in mind the best interest of a child.

From the pool of contestants, Ena Francesca R. Cadayona from Caraga National High School bagged the grand prize; followed by Joyce Ken Lei D. Daquio (1st runner up) from Kidapawan City National High School; and Jona R. Mocam (2nd runner up) from Matanao National High School in Davao del Sur.

The three winners received cash prizes, plaques, and freebies from the sponsors of the event.

Legal adoption protects children's rights
As the lead agency on the protection of the welfare of children, DSWD promotes legal adoption to ensure that the rights of children are protected.

For the second quarter of 2016, there were already 155 children locally matched or placed with prospective adoptive parents (PAPs), and 203 children endorsed to the Inter-Country Adoption Board (ICAB) for inter-country adoption.

For 2017, the Department aims to increase the number of local prospective adoptive parents and raise the number of children eligible for adoption within the prescribed turnaround time.

DSWD also warned the public against birth simulation or tampering with the civil registry of children so that adoptive parents can have their names on the child's birth certificate.

"Sa mga taong gustong mag-ampon, dapat nilang malaman na ang simulation of birth ay isang krimen. Sundin nila dapat ang ligal na proseso para masigurado ang kapakanan ng kanilang mga batang aampunin (Those who want to adopt children should know that birth simulation is a crime. They should instead follow the legal process of adoption to protect the welfare of the children we want to adopt)," DSWD Sec. Judy Taguiwalo said.

NCDCA receives wheelchairs for persons with disabilities



The United Korean Community Association in the Philippines (UKCAP), in partnership with Community Chest of Korea, is supporting the Philippines through provision of wheelchairs to indigent beneficiaries. The National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDCA) was among the national government agencies that received 46 wheelchairs intended for persons with disabilities.

The other recipients were the National Children's Hospital, Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC), Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), Parañaque City Hospital, Makati Anti-Drug Abuse Council, Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center, Philippine Expeditionary Forces to Korea (PEFTOK) Veterans Association, Inc., Sorok Uni Foundation, and Joy Disability Missions, Inc.

The turn-over ceremony was attended by Mr. Kim Keun Han, Pres. of UKCAP, Mr. Hwang Ki Soon, the donor, Mr. Rizalio R. Sanchez, Chief of Information, Education and Communication Division of NCDCA, representatives of national government agencies, and organizations of PWDs.

In his message, Mr. Soon thanked the people of Korea for their generous donations. "Many people have helped to make this donation possible," Mr. Soon said. 🍀



JJWC COLORS OF HOPE

"Sana po makita nila yung **mensahe** ng ipipinta ko."

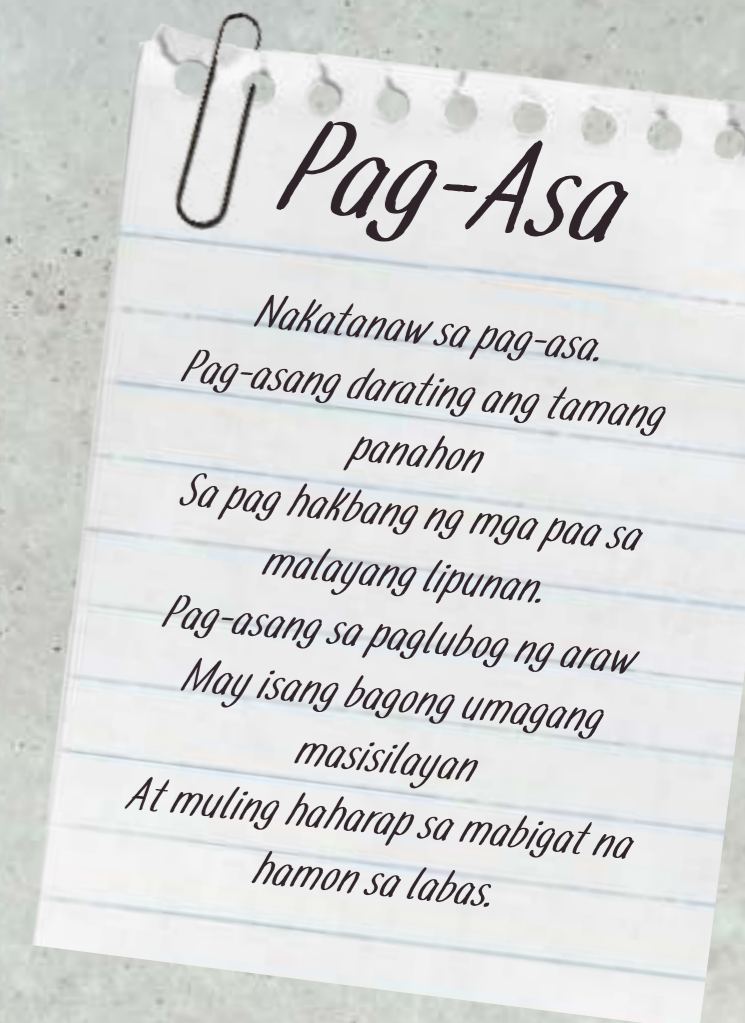
Kaloy, a resident of National Training School for Boys (NTSB), was a little more excited than the rest of the participants -- he was first to arrive at the venue and easily eased up with everyone in the room.

In October, the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) conducted a series of Art Sessions in selected DSWD-operated rehabilitation facilities. This activity is part of the Council's advocacy efforts to communicate stories of CIGL to a wider audience.

Twenty residents were selected to participate in the art sessions. With the help of an invited visual artist, the residents learned the basics of drawing and painting. Prior to the actual painting session, the participants had a small group discussion focused on: a) stories before they came to NTSB; b) experiences and realizations during their rehabilitation; and, c) their dreams and plans after NTSB. These topics served as themes for their art works.

Being the enthusiastic young boy that he is, Kaloy was also the first to finish his work. "Ayan na po ang kulay ng pag-asa," said Kaloy while handing over his canvas.

All the art works produced during the art sessions in NTSB, Marillac Hills and Nayon ng Kabataan were featured in the Photo and Art Exhibit mounted by the JJWC for the 2nd National Family Courts Summit last October 27-28, 2016. 🍀



2017 THRUSTS & PRIORITIES

Rationale and Context

The Department of Social Welfare and Development directly contributes to the attainment of three items in President Rodrigo Duterte's ten point socio-economic agenda, namely:

Item 7: Invest in human capital development, including health and educational systems, and match skills and training to meet the demand of businesses and private sector.

Item 9: Improve the social protection programs, including the government's Conditional Cash Transfer program, to protect the poor against instability and economic shocks.

Item 10: Strengthen implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law to enable poor couples to make informed choices on financial and family planning.

These national agenda shall be implemented by the Department through its core values of respect for human dignity, service, excellence and integrity. We have learned from the past that the poor and marginalized should be treated with respect and compassion. We are servants of the people, and the people expect no less from us.

The Department adopted President Duterte's call of *malasakit* as guidance for its policy development, program execution, and impact evaluation. We listened and empathized with our clientele to provide services and extend relief to those in crisis while developing programs that can address the root cause of their problems. We understood that Filipino social welfare service requires personal touch and fairness.

The Department shall build on the gains it has achieved in improving the level of well-being and reducing the vulnerabilities of the poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged sectors in the society. Its organizational and operational plan and budget will focus on carrying out its mandate and vision by extending prompt, adequate and caring service to the Filipino people through inter-agency and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

This document reflects the convergence strategy within the Department's different programs as well as inter-agency coordination to harmonize and complement common program activities that directly help the poor, disadvantaged, marginalized, and track a common path of poverty eradication.

With the Department continuously implementing statutory and specialized programs and services, it will strengthen its "steerer of enabler" role. Its efforts will revolve around developing model social protection programs and adequate provision of Technical Assistance and Resource Augmentation particularly to Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDOs) to strengthen their capacities to deliver coordinated social protection and social welfare services at their localities.

Embedded in all of these, the Department will continue to mainstream Gender and Development (GAD) strategies to promote women's empowerment and eliminate gender discrimination in its system, structures, policies, programs and services.

Objectives

The 2017 DSWD thrusts and priorities aim to promote collaboration with critical stakeholders at all levels, coordinate service delivery of social protection programs and strengthen the Department's organizational capacities.

It shall guide and direct all DSWD Bureaus, Services, National Project Management Offices, and Field offices in the formulation of their respective plans and budget as well as performance contracts.

Thrusts & Priorities

The following thrusts and priorities shall contribute to the achievement of DSWD's organizational outcomes.

Organizational Outcome 1: Capacities and targeted poor families to access opportunities enhanced and their level of well-being improved.

- a. Appropriate interventions using the Social Welfare Development Indicators (SWDI) results are identified and implemented.
- b. Program for the Pantawid transitioning families to make their transition out of poverty sustainable created.
- c. Functional referral system at the local level for the transitioning Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries established.
- d. Participation of Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries through the KCNCDDP and SLP projects ensured.
- e. Review of family development sessions and expansion of topics to include responsible parenthood and reproductive health, environmental protection, climate change, anti-drug abuse, patriotism, and love of country accomplished.
- f. Rice subsidy to Pantawid beneficiaries provided.
- g. Model of intervention for non-Pantawid poor families developed.

Organizational Outcome 2: Rights of the vulnerable sector protected and promoted.

- a. Model of intervention programs for vulnerable sectors promoted
- b. Mechanism for disaster response improved.
- c. Programs for vulnerable sector implemented and evaluated.
- d. Production and delivery capacity of 80,000 Family Packs (food and non-food) sustained at any given time.
- e. Mechanisms for addressing malnutrition in ARMM implemented.
- f. Mechanisms for addressing the forced evacuations of Indigenous People (IP) families, communities and other affected sectors due to military operations implemented.
- g. Comprehensive programs for street children and the homeless implemented.
- h. Residential care facilities assessed and enhanced in accordance with the standards for Centers of Excellence.
- i. After care and reintegration support and transformation of recovering drug dependents implemented.
- j. Policies and ensuring the rights of the vulnerable sectors enhanced and promoted.
- k. Good practices on SWD interventions for vulnerable sector documented and promoted for its replication.
- l. Soldiers and families of soldiers killed-in-action or wounded-in-action provided with necessary assistance.

Organizational Outcome 3: Delivery of coordinated Social Welfare and development Programs by the Local Government Unit (LGU) and other intermediaries improved.

- a. Levels of functionality of LSWDOs assessed.
- b. Fully functional LSWDOs increased.
- c. Capacity building intervention program for LSWDOs provided
- d. Usage of Social Welfare and Development Report (SWDR) for the local development planning promoted
- e. LGU good practices on social protection programs and initiatives documented.
- f. Accuracy and consistency of Listahanan validated and ensured.

Organizational Outcome 4: Continuing compliance of social welfare and development agencies (SWDAs) to standards in the delivery of social welfare services and compliance of CSOs to accreditation standards ensured

- a. Number of SWDAs accredited and licensed increased
- b. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) compliant to the standards accredited.
- c. Accreditation guidelines and procedures reviewed and streamlined.
- d. Capacity building interventions programs of SWDAs and service providers provided
- e. Policies on social welfare services and standards implemented

The following priorities for CY 2017 for support to operations and general administration service were formulated anchored on the above considerations:

A. SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS

1. Turnaround time on the frontline services of the Department such as but not limited to Assistance to Individual in Crisis Situation and Standards Regulation process improved
2. TARA plans by Field Offices (FOs) formulated and implemented.
3. Partnership with local and national social welfare association, private sector and international organizations enhanced
4. DSWD-hosted events for ASEAN efficiently and effectively conducted
5. And engaging strategic communication program that will highlight the Department's programs, activities, and services developed.
6. Guidelines for incentive system for fully functional LSWDOs reviewed and enhanced
7. Usage of the listahanan data for programs and services promoted compliant to the data Privacy act.
8. Data warehouse system operationalized.
9. Spoilage of relief goods prevented.
10. Information management through efficient use technology improved.
11. All FOs and OBS implementing unified result-based monitoring and evaluation system (URBMES).
12. Strategic audits conducted as part of internal audit plan.
13. Risk management plan implemented.
14. Integrity management program (IMP) implemented and sustained.
15. Efficient management and disposition of administrative cases insured.
16. Approved 2017 DSWD Legislative Agenda Advanced and pursue.

B. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

1. DSWD 2017-2022 Corporate plan and Expenditure Program reviewed, developed, and finalized.
2. Financial system on the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in implementing the DSWD's programs, including the CCT evaluated.
3. DSWD tasks force and other policy making bodies i.e. Civil Service Commission & DBM established to study the issue on contractualization in the Department.
4. Responsive DSWD re-organization and Plan finalized and approved.
5. Incentives to personnel, including MOA workers and job orders sustained.
6. Regularization plan of MOA workers and job orders sustained.
7. Succession plan for critical positions developed and enforced.
8. Capacity building plan for DSWD personnel implemented.
9. Efficient transport, communications, and utilities ensured.
10. Timely release of salaries and cost of services guaranteed.
11. Continuous supply of power at all times ensured.
12. Preventive maintenance program for DSWD vehicles improved for road worthiness.
13. Efficient retrieval and safe keeping of all DSWD permanent records provided.
14. Turn-around time of procurement transaction reduced.

C. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

1. DSWD GAD Agenda for 2017 implemented.
2. Gender responsive assessment of agency programs and using the projects of Harmonized GAD Guidelines tool conducted.
3. Offices, Bureaus, and Services guarantee timely fund-allocation of the approved CY 2017 Field Office GAD Plan and budget under their centrally-managed fund (CMF).
4. Adopt the gender fair-language in the Department.

D. RESEARCH AGENDA

1. Impact evaluation of supplementary feeding program conducted.
2. Impact evaluation of educational assistance to beneficiaries of Assistance to Individual Crisis Situation (AICS) and impact evaluation of skills training to beneficiaries in the employment facilitation track of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP)
3. Review of DSWD programs' contribution to environmental protection conducted.
4. Review of DSWD programs' contribution to reproductive health conducted.
5. Review of the social protection framework and its component conducted.
6. Impact of social welfare attaches' deployment and analyzed.

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