



2019

ANNUAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

I would like to commend the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) National Program Management Office, under the able leadership of Director Gemma B. Gabuya, for coming up with this Annual Report on 4Ps narrating the 2019 gains of the program.

More than a decade after its inception in 2008, 4Ps has achieved significant milestones in improving the lives of its beneficiaries.

One such milestone is the enactment of the 4Ps Law institutionalizing the program of 2019. This is a result of the shared values, commitment, and strong collaboration among stakeholders towards realizing a “*Matatag, Maginhawa, at Panatag na Buhay*” vision for all Filipinos as embodied in Ambisyon 2040.


The 4Ps, as the national government strategy for poverty reduction, lays the foundation of a whole-of-government approach that helps beneficiaries rise from poverty towards sustainability and self-sufficiency upon graduation from the program.

The gains of 4Ps are the reflection of every Filipino's dream of living a productive life and providing a better future for their children. The accomplishments of the program as outlined in this Annual Report are a testament to its success over the years.

I am overwhelmed by the support of other government agencies, development partners, the private sector, non-government and civil society organizations in helping us empower our poor countrymen to cross over poverty towards progress through 4Ps.

Together, let us sustain these noble strides and continue to strengthen the bridge as our leverage in giving the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged a just and dignified life.

Ipagpatuloy natin ang maagap at mapagkalingang serbisyo para sa ating mga kababayan.


ROLANDO JOSELITO B. BAUTISTA
Secretary



MESSAGE FROM THE UNDERSECRETARY AND NATIONAL PROJECT DIRECTOR, PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM

Over the years, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), has recorded several milestones and significant changes that are geared towards improving the lives of our poor and disadvantaged countrymen, most especially the children.

The (4Ps) recognizes the importance of education, health and nutrition, thus, providing thousands of poor children a fighting chance of leaving the vicious cycle of inter-generational poverty and living healthy and productive lives.

Moreover, we laud the institutionalization of the program through the enactment of the 4Ps Act in April 2019 which gives the more than four million household-beneficiaries of the program continuous and guaranteed benefits as mandated by the law.

With the law, children-beneficiaries enrolled in junior and senior high school now receive higher cash grants. Moreover, beneficiaries who are compliant to the health conditions and have regular attendance to the Family Development Sessions enjoy a higher amount of grant.

Looking back, the realization of the program outcomes would not be possible without the unwavering support of the different national government agencies and the local government units. The beneficiaries also played a vital role, not just in contributing to the success of the program, but more importantly in the institutionalization of the program.

The program currently has a total of 5,066,892 registered households. Of this number, 4,250,272 are active households-beneficiaries with 4,026,964 covered by the regular Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) while 223,308 are part of the Modified Conditional Cash Transfer.

Together, we have achieved significant results, and despite the numerous challenges that we have hurdled, we continue to ensure that the program becomes better, more efficient and responsive to the needs of the different stakeholders.

As we enter another decade of implementation, we remain steadfast in our commitment of leading our beneficiaries towards improved well-being. We look forward to households exiting from 4Ps, and will be transitioning to other programs that will equip them with the necessary tools to sustain their progress and protect them from sliding back to poverty.


AIMEE S. TORREFRANCA-NERI
Undersecretary



MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER, PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM

The passage of the RA 11310 on April 19, 2019 marked an important milestone for the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) as it was institutionalized to serve as the national poverty reduction strategy of the government, and a human capital investment program that provides conditional cash transfer to poor households to improve the health, nutrition and education aspect of their lives. Specifically, the program aims to break the cycle of intergenerational transmission and reduce future poverty by keeping the children ages 0-18 healthy and in school through the different interventions of the program.

All 4Ps active household beneficiaries who receive conditional cash grants allocated through the program modalities provided that they comply with the different conditionalities of the program on health, nutrition, and education including the monthly participation to the Family Development Sessions (FDS) and Youth Development Sessions. It is implemented by other program initiatives, interventions and other development opportunities such as generating jobs and creating livelihood opportunities.

In 2019, the program immediately started to operationalize the whole-of-government approach through convergence which direction is to ensure that the beneficiaries exit or graduate from the program within seven years attaining the status of improved well-being. Service delivery is led by the 4Ps-National Program Management Office, through seamless coordination, systematic, and dynamic approach as mandated by the law and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The crafting of development frameworks, like Kilos-Unlad, Convergence Framework, among others, guidelines and innovative concept papers, ensued to support its implementation in collaboration with other government agencies and institutional partners.

In September 2019, 4Ps started utilizing the Social Welfare and Development Indicator Tool (SWDI), targeting 3,716,005 household beneficiaries in the entire country to regulate or assess the living conditions of beneficiaries of the program.

As of December 31, 2019, a total of 151,207 or 40% households have been validated and were approved in the Replacement of Households of the target of 381,314 households. Of this number, 146,802 are households eligible to receive the payment with children for monitoring, eligible for health and rice subsidy.

In the same year, innovations like the Bata Balik Eskwela Campaign were introduced to address the identified gap of children Not Attending School or NAS. This Campaign aims to revive aspirations of Pantawid student beneficiaries so they can attend school until they graduate. To date we already have 484,265 student beneficiaries returned in school. This initiative also aims to encourage and strengthen the viability of the program as facilitator of change.

The stories of the program beneficiaries led us to the boundless breakthrough, the very essence of RA 11310 and the IRR aimed to achieve giving us real faces that we are on the right track.

The 4Ps as its core uses rights-based approach and will always ensure that we, as duty bearers, shall work in the promotion of sustainability and empowering the beneficiaries as rights holders, to achieve their improved well-being.

Our service is to continue providing our beneficiaries the needed interventions with aspiration that in the near future, we will see them achieve and reach their full potentials becoming active in the community where they belong and contributing to our country's development.

GEMMA B. GABUYA
Director

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION 2019

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

I. PROGRAM

A. Geographic Coverage

Pantawid Pamilya is already on its 11th year of implementation. The program started in 2008 covering 160 cities and municipalities in 28 provinces in all 17 regions. As of 31 December 2019, the program is covering 41,539 barangays in all 145 cities and 1,482 municipalities in 80 provinces nationwide (Table 1).

**Table 1: Geographic Coverage
(as of 31 December 2019)**

Level	Nationwide Count	Target Areas	Actual	Percentage of Coverage
Region	17	17	17	100.00%
Province	81	80 ¹	80	100.00%
City	145	145	145	100.00%
Municipality	1,489	1,482 ²	1,482	100.00%
Barangay	42,045	41,999	41,539	98.90%

¹ The Province of Batanes is not covered by the program because of its high Human Development Index and Zero Poverty Incidence (PSA-NSCB, 2009).
² The island municipality of Kalayaan, Palawan is not covered because there are only household (PSA-NSO, 2007).

B. Household Coverage

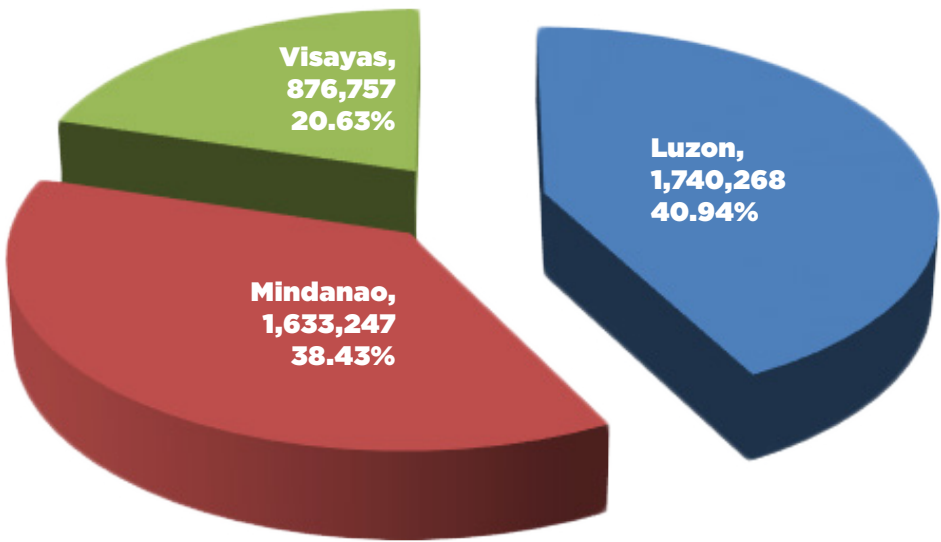
As of 31 December 2019, the program registered 5,066,892 households since the program started in 2008. Out of the total number of registered households, 4,250,272 are active households registered or 96.60% of this year’s target of 4,400,000 households. Out of these, 4,026,964 or 94.75% are covered by the regular Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program while 223,308 or 5.25% are covered by the Modified Conditional Cash Transfer.

Table 2: Household Coverage
Regular and Modified Conditional Cash Transfer
(as of 31 December 2019)

Level	Target Households	Number of Active Households	Percentage (Target vs. Actual)
Regular Conditional Cash Transfer	4,164,711	4,026,964	96.69%
MCCT - Indigenous People in Geographical Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas	180,019	190,505	105.82%
MCCT – Victims of natural and man-made disaster	50,164	28,087	55.99%
MCCT - Homeless Street Families	5,106	4,716	92.36%
Total	4,400,000³	4,250,272	96.60%

Based on the distribution of households, 1,740,268 (40.94%) are from Luzon, 1,633,247 (38.43%) from Mindanao, and 876,757 (20.63%) from Visayas (Figure 1). A significant share of beneficiaries is from Luzon and Mindanao as most poor households are concentrated in these island groups.

Figure 1: Household Coverage by Island Group
(As of 31 December 2019)



3 The 2019 target is stipulated in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) FY 2019.

II. GRANTS RELEASED

From January to December 2019 (Period 6 of 2018 to Period 6 of 2019), the total cash grants released is PhP 80,227,295,600.00 paid to eligible and compliant Pantawid Pamilya household beneficiaries. Of this amount, PhP 27,329,640,900.00 is for education grants, PhP 24,121,998,500.00 is for health grants and Php 28,775,656,200.00 is for rice subsidy.

In the effort to continuously improve the delivery of grants, the Department, through the Land Bank of the Philippines, is engaging other service providers such as local rural banks, and cooperatives as partner conduits. The table below shows the distribution of cash grants based on the payment modes.

Table 3: Distribution of Cash Grants per Payment Mode

Payment Mode	Conduit Financial Institution	Education Grant	Health Grant	Rice Subsidy	Total Amount ⁴	Percentage
Cash Card	Landbank Cash Card	4,026,964	4,026,964	4,026,964	4,026,964	96.69%
Cash Card	FCB Pitakard	190,505	190,505	190,505	190,505	105.82%
Cash Card	Philippine Veterans Bank Card	28,087	28,087	28,087	28,087	55.99%
Cash Card	Philippine Veterans Bank Pending for Cash Card Account Opening	4,716	4,716	4,716	4,716	92.36%
Cash Card Total		24,300,871,000	20,746,102,250	24,668,827,800	69,715,801,150	86.90%
Over the Counter	Cooperative	1,031,547,900	1,293,929,500	1,587,093,600	3,912,571,000	4.88%
Over the Counter	Rural Banks	720,043,200	837,801,000	1,028,236,800	2,586,081,000	3.22%
Over the Counter	For Conversion of LBP Cash Card	331,224,200	218,911,500	268,983,600	819,119,300	1.02%
Over the Counter	LBP Pending for Account Opening/CC Distribution for Future Top-Up	455,217,800	396,212,250	442,876,800	1,294,306,850	1.61%
Over the Counter	For LBP Procurement of Conduits (BARMM OTC)	490,736,700	629,042,000	779,637,600	1,899,416,300	2.37%
Over the Counter Total		3,028,769,800	3,375,896,250	4,106,828,400	10,511,494,450	13.10%
Grand Total		27,329,640,900	24,121,998,500	28,775,656,200	80,227,295,600	100.00%

III. SYSTEMS UPDATES

A. Beneficiary Updates System (BUS)

The BUS records changes on the status or condition of households. It captures recent information about household members to serve as basis in monitoring compliance of beneficiaries. Updating is a continuous process to ensure that the beneficiaries are availing the maximum health and education grants.

From February 2019 to January 2020, a total of 7,068,397 updates were encoded and approved. The breakdown of the update types is as follows:

4 Total amount released based from Period 6 2018 to Period 6 of 2019 (January to December 2019) compliance monitoring for CY 2019 Obligations.

Table 4: Total Number of Updates
From February 2019 to January 2020 (Period 1 to 6 of 2019) Updates

Type of Update	No. of Updates Received
Change/new enrolment in school	5,791,153
Correction of Basic Information	511,498
Change of monitored children for compliance	269,960
Additional Household Member	204,026
IP Affiliation	119,350
Change of Grantee of the Household	78,105
Change of Address	43,306
Deceased Beneficiaries	17,947
Change/new registration in health center	16,976
Pregnancy Status	12,253
New born	3,823
Total	7,068,397

Of the total updates, change/new enrolment in school has the highest number filed with 5,791,153 (81.93%) followed by correction of basic information with 511,498 (7.24%).

B. Compliance Verification System (CVS)

The CVS monitors the compliance of households with the conditions of the program as basis for the provision of grants. The table below shows the monthly compliance rates indicating the number of compliant household members for each type of conditionality for the period of January⁵ – December 2019.

Table 5: January – December 2019 (Period 1 to 6) Compliance Rates

Months	Attendance in Day Care/Pre-School for Children 3-5 Years Old	Attendance in Primary and Secondary School for Children 6-14 Years Old	Attendance in Primary and Secondary School for Children 15-18 Years Old	Check-up/ Immunization for Pregnant and Children 0-5 Years Old	Health (Deworming) for children 6-14 years old in Elementary Level	Attendance to Family Development Session
January	97.36%	96.79%	94.71%	97.94%	97.64%	94.98%
February	97.86%	96.95%	95.33%	98.06%	98.35%	94.78%
March	97.96%	97.54%	96.10%	98.06%	98.35%	94.85%
April	Summer Vacation			98.20%		96.96%
May	Summer Vacation			98.18%		96.70%
June	93.23%	95.47%	91.84%	97.87%	98.34%	94.22%
July	93.18%	95.23%	91.71%	97.87%	98.34%	93.91%
August	96.61%	96.61%	94.06%	97.58%	98.36%	93.49%
September	96.65%	96.75%	94.28%	97.58%	98.36%	93.67%
October	97.47%	96.46%	94.12%	97.83%	99.39%	93.36%
November	97.64%	96.90%	94.60%	97.83%	99.39%	93.32%
December	97.20%	96.51%	94.12%	97.88%	97.21%	93.41%

⁵ Period refers to the bimonthly monitoring for compliance verification. In the original monitoring periods, P1 refers to January – February; P2 is March – April, and P3 is May to June. However, there are changes made to save time, resources and simplify the compliance verification process particularly during the monitoring periods covering the months of summer vacation of student beneficiaries. The new monitoring months being implemented are the following: P1 is February – March; P2 is April – May; P3 is June – July; P4 is August – September; P5 October – November; and P6 is December – January.

C. Grievance Redress System (GRS)

From January to December 2019, a total of 141,648⁶ complaints were encoded and recorded in the GRS through various modes such as calls, grievance forms, social networking sites, courier, and electronic mail. Of the total encoded grievances, 136,731 (96.53%) have been resolved.

Table 6: Total Number of Complaints Received
(from January to December 2019)

Grievance Category	On-Going	Resolved	Total	% Resolved	Resolved within the GRS timeline	% Resolved within GRS timeline
Payment-Related Issues	2,635	70,044	72,679	96.37%	69,914	99.81%
Cash Card Related Issues	999	40,857	41,856	97.61%	40,455	99.02%
Others	22	9,020	9,042	99.76%	8,823	97.82%
Misbehavior of Beneficiary	731	7,751	8,482	91.38%	6,928	89.38%
Appeal for Reinstatement	266	4,109	4,375	93.92%	3,973	96.69%
Ineligibility	215	1,952	2,167	90.08%	1,682	86.17%
Request for Social Services	0	1,724	1,724	100.00%	1,723	99.94%
Gender Related Cases	27	958	985	97.26%	954	99.58%
Grievance on Staff Performance	17	144	161	89.44%	135	93.75%
Grievance on Partner's Performance	5	156	161	96.89%	153	98.08%
Support Service Intervention Issues	0	9	9	100.00%	9	100.00%
Facility Issues	0	7	7	100.00%	7	100.00%
TOTAL	4,917	136,731	141,648	96.53%	134,756	98.56%

Out of the 141,648 complaints, 72,679 grievance fall under Payment-Related Issues which is constantly the highest number of filed complaints. These include compliance and updating issues, for some regions, it is mostly due to reduced cash grants both in health and education.

The GRS accounts the total number of delisted and deactivated households since 2009. As of 31 December 2019, 75,248 household beneficiaries have been delisted based on existing policies, while 639,529 have been deactivated and are pending for validation of field offices. Deactivated households are households whose status as program beneficiaries are suspended either due to inconsistencies in data, on-going validation process, or other issues of the households. Delisted households, on the other hand, are households that have been removed from the program due to the following reasons: fraudulent acts, inclusion error, and household waived their inclusion into the program. The total number of delisted and deactivated household by category is provided below. Table 7: Total Number of Delisted Based on the Existing Policies (as of 31 December 2019)

⁶ GRS Data Entry Application from January to December 2019.

**Table 7: Total Number of Delisted Based on the Existing Policies
(as of 31 December 2019)**

Category of Delisted HHs	No. of HHs
Inclusion error ⁷	75,248
Total	75,248

**Table 8: Total Number of Deactivated: Pending for Validation
(as of 31 December 2019)**

Category of Deactivated HHs	No. of HHs
Deactivated: No more Eligible Children for Monitoring as Validated by the Field Office ⁸	343,448
Deactivated: Pending for Validation	296,081
No more eligible children for monitoring (system generated)	216,593
No longer Present in Last Known Address	79,488
Total	639,529

IV. HUMAN RESOURCE

A total of 14,046 technical and administrative positions assigned at the National and Regional Offices (including personnel assigned at the covered provinces and cities/municipalities) has been approved for the program. As of 31 December 2019, 13,455 personnel have been hired (95.79% of the total approved positions). Additionally, 8,779 personnel are under in contractual position (65.25% of the total hired staff).

**Table 9: Number of Approved and Actual Number of Program Personnel
(As of 31 December 2019)**

Level		Number of Approved Positions	Number of Hired Personnel	%
NATIONAL	Contractual	295	264	90.14%
	Cost of Service (MOA)	77	62	80.52%
	Job Order (Recalled Job Order Position)	20	0	0%
	SUB-TOTAL	389	326	83.80%
REGIONAL	Contractual	8,733	8,515	97.50%
	Cost of Service (MOA)	4,604	4,304	93.48%
	Job Order	320	310	96.88%
	SUB-TOTAL	13,657	13,129	96.13%
GRAND TOTAL		14,046	13,455	95.79%

⁷ Complaint about active registered beneficiaries who is considered to be ineligible to receive the Program's benefits and validated as such.
⁸ This category refers to households with no more 0 to 18 years old members.

V. OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS/UPDATES

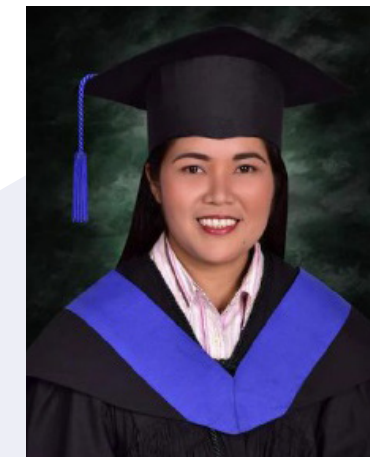
A. Partnership and Collaboration with National Government Agencies

Partnership with Commission on Higher Education, Department of Labor and Employment and Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges on the Student Grants in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (SGP-PA) and the Expanded SGP-PA. For Academic Year 2017-2018, there are a total of 23,489 graduates. Out of the total number of graduates, 973 graduated with honors and awards. Out of these, 58 are Magna Cum Laude, 858 are Cum Laude and 57 received a leadership award. Moreover, there are still 12,778 college students enrolled for Academic Year 2018-2019.



Johanna Heart Genon inspires other students at the Araw ng Pagkilala 2018

Johanna Heart Genon used to live inside the Chinese Cemetery in Barangay Carreta, Cebu City, with full college scholarship at the University of Cebu (UC) enrolled as an incoming freshmen taking up Civil Engineering course



First from the Mountains: A Graduation Story of a Girl from Tau't Bato

Coming from a tribe who has been long isolated in the mountains, Juda Diklay, 25, from *Tau't Bato* tribe, ESGP-PA Grantee, earned a Bachelor Degree in Elementary Education and first to graduate college from her tribe.



Rigie May R. Marbella, graduate of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in Bicol University Polangui Campus, a proud ESGP-PA grantee, an Honorific-Academic Awardee and a single mom.

B. Other Intervention Provided to Pantawid Pamilya Beneficiaries

Provision of Micro-Enterprise Development through Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). From January 2011 to December 2019, a total of 1,475,206 Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries were referred to and funded by Micro-Finance Institutions and other formal lending institutions.



Employment Facilitation Activities through Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). Beneficiaries were provided guaranteed employment by various public and private partners through SLP. From January 2011 to December 2019, there are 372,931 Pantawid Pamilya household beneficiaries were employed through Trabahong Lansangan in partnership with Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).



KALAHI-CIDDS. One of the poverty alleviation of the program of the government being implemented by the Department. It uses the community-driven development approach, as a strategy for achieving service delivery, poverty reduction, and good governance outcome. As of December 2019, there are 2,378,349 Pantawid Pamilya household benefitted from 24,420 completed sub-projects.

4Ps Institutes Policy Reforms for Better and More Efficient Program Implementation

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program since its inception in 2007 has instituted several policy reforms that lead to better and more efficient program implementation and putting the beneficiaries' welfare at the forefront.

With the institutionalization of the 4Ps, various policies were passed and major activities were undertaken to ensure that the program is geared towards improvement of the beneficiaries' well-being leading them towards program exit or graduation.

For this year, the National Program Management Office (NPMO) together with the Regional Program Management Office led the assessment of the 4Ps beneficiaries using the Social Welfare and Development Indicator (SWDI) tool. By end of 2019 around 2.3 million households have been visited to determine their well-being level. The result of the assessment will be used not just

of the DSWD but more importantly of the program's partners such as other National Government Agencies, Local Governments, private institutions, civil society organization, in outlining the Local Government Unit Sustainability Plan.

The National Advisory Council (NAC) passed the Resolution Number 43, institutionalizing a replacement policy that allows for the continuous replacement of CCT households. This was further supplemented by the issuance of the Memorandum Circular number 12, Implementing Guidelines on the Replacement of Pantawid Pamilya Households to Reach the Annual Household Coverage. The program targeted 381,314 potential households to be registered in the program to complete the 4.4 million household coverage. By end of 2019, around 39% or 244,616 households were assessed, of which 146,802 have been registered in the program.



The NPMO also initiated the first conduct of the Regional Program Managers and Regional Program Coordinators conference. The conference aimed to provide updates, clarify concerns particularly on the new policies and guidelines passed by the NPMO and the NAC. This also served as a venue to recognized Regional Program Management Offices that reached milestones in the implementation of the program. Awards/ Special Citation and RPMOs recognized are as follows:

Awards/Special Citation	Awardees
Bata Balik Eskwela Efforts	DSWD Field Office I
Bata Balik Eskwela Campaign	DSWD Field Office VIII
Bata Balik Eskwela Pilot Testing	DSWD Field Office II, III and IV-CALABARZON, NCR
GAD Mainstreaming Activities	DSWD Field Office IV CALABARZON and IX
MCCT Mainstreaming	DSWD Field Office VII, VIII and IX
Pilot Testing of Community Organizing	DSWD Field Office IX, X, XI, XII, and CARAGA
Sustained MCCT SSI Projects	DSWD Field Office I, VII
Learner Reference Number of Validation	DSWD Field Office IV MIMAROPA, V, VI, VII
Systems Innovation	DSWD Field Office I, V, and CARAGA
Partnership Efforts on "Bata Balik Eskwela"	DSWD Field Office I, II, III, V, VII, VIII, X, NCR, CAR, and CARAGA
Timely Resolution of Complaints	DSWD Field Office III, V, XII and BARMM MSS
SSA Gaps Addressed Thru LGU Support	DSWD Field Office III, X, CAR and CARAGA
Social Marketing Initiatives	DSWD Field Office IV MIMAROPA
IEC on Active Citizen	DSWD Field Office IV MIMAROPA and IX
Localization of IEC Materials	DSWD Field Office IV MIMAROPA, VII and IX
FDS Development Needs Assessment	DSWD Field Office I
Validation of Non-Moving Accounts	DSWD Field Office I, II, III, IV-CALABARZON, XI, CARAGA and BARM MSS
Knowledge Management Initiative	DSWD Field Office XII and CAR
Awards/Special Citation	Awards/Special Citation



RA 11310 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

The institutionalization of the 4Ps program through RA 11310 provides health, education and employment and livelihood opportunities geared towards the sustainable improvement of the lives of beneficiaries that prepare them for eventual program exit. Poor households that meet certain qualifications will be provided conditional cash transfers to improve the health, nutrition, and education aspects of their lives for a maximum period of seven (7) years.

The subsequent Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the 4Ps Act was developed through a series of national and regional consultations led by the DSWD. The dialogues were attended and participated by National Government Agencies, local chief executives, and representatives from the Civil Society and Non-Government Organizations, as well as program beneficiaries, among others. Subsequently, the IRR was signed on December 10, 2019, in time for the International Human Rights' Day. The DSWD adapted the participatory and consultative approach in the crafting of the IRR. Series of consultations and reviews with various stakeholders from the national, regional and local levels were involved.

The DSWD is mandated to strengthen partnerships within and outside of government. Section 19 of R.A. No. 11310 states that within the framework of a national poverty alleviation strategy and holistic social protection program, the convergence of programs and services shall focus on the enhancement of operational efficiency and strengthening of partnerships with Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), People's

Organization (POs), National Government Agencies (NGAs) and other members of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Convergence and partnerships with various multi-stakeholder programs and services is critical in strengthening inter-agency partnership and complementation support to the program.

Crucial in this regard is the multi-stakeholder approach in the responsive delivery of appropriate interventions to the HH-beneficiaries. Convergence with different stakeholders such as NGAs, LGUs, and members of civil society will be carried out as one of the strategies to ensure that the program objectives are met. The law calls for the provision of livelihood interventions as well as other relevant programs and services needed by beneficiaries to sustainably uplift them from poverty.

RA 11310 also specifies the selection of qualified household-beneficiaries through the use of a standardized targeting system and assessment. This shall be done for all households residing in rural-classified and in urban-classified barangays with high concentration of poor and near poor. Farmers, fisherfolks, homeless families, Indigenous Peoples, those in the informal settler sector and those in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) including those areas without electricity are automatically included in the standardized targeting system.

Eligible household-beneficiaries are those a) classified as poor and near poor based on the Standardized Targeting System; b) have members who are zero (0) to eighteen



DSWD Secretary Rolando D. Bautista (seated in the middle) led the signing of the 4Ps Law Implementing Rules and Regulations last December 10. Secretary Bautista is joined by representatives from other National Government Agencies and Officials of the DSWD.

(18) years old or have members who are pregnant at the time of registration; and c) willing to comply with the conditions set on the oath of commitment and household intervention plan. The program becomes regular with funding allocation through the GAA for its implementation that anchors in the underlying principles and application of a rights-based approach.

As stipulated in the law, all household-beneficiaries are automatically covered by the National Health Insurance Program or PhilHealth. It also provides for higher cash grants among beneficiaries. Education grant for Senior High School increases from P500 to P700/month for 10 months each child, while a P250 hike for health grant from P500 to P750/month.

Qualified-household beneficiaries are also prioritized in availing the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the DSWD or similar programs offered by other government agencies or accredited private institutions.

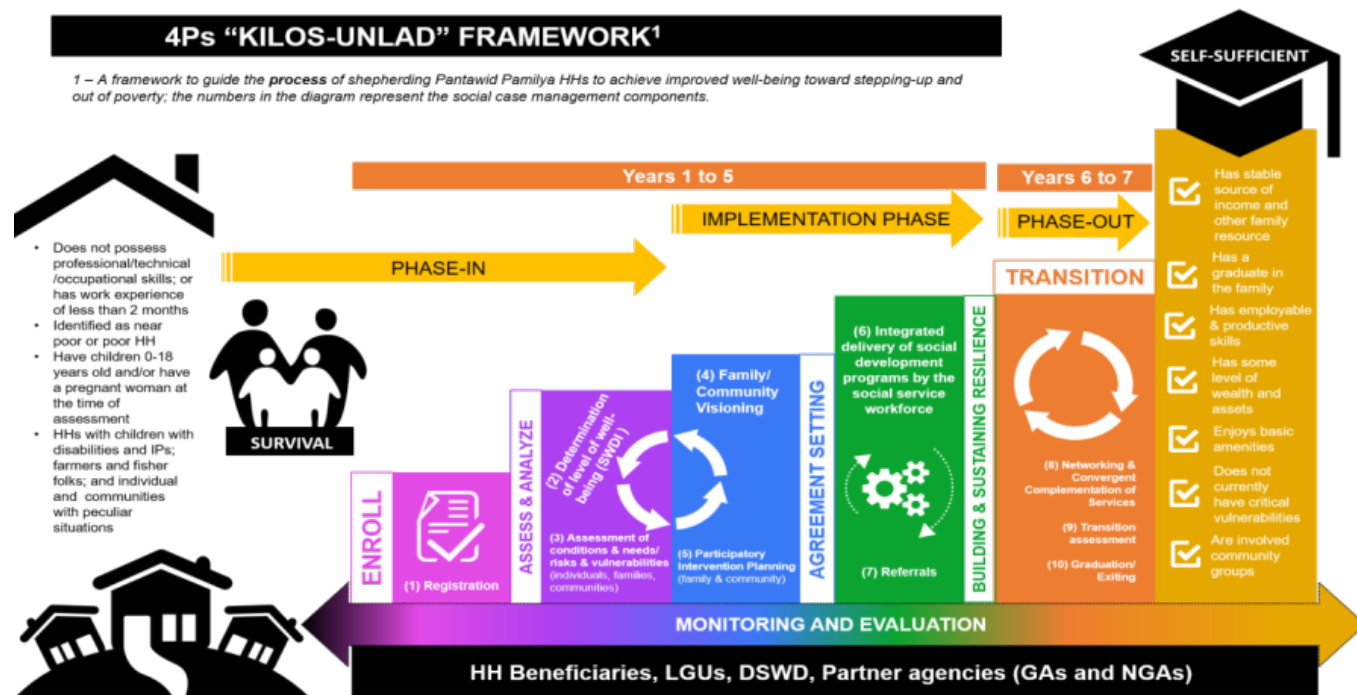
The Family Development Sessions (FDS) shall be improved to allow the program beneficiaries enhance and acquire new skills and knowledge on parental roles and responsibilities towards shared parenting, family development and promotion of positive values and strengthening marital relationships. The FDS shall also be a venue to advocate active citizenship, spiritual

development, gender sensitivity, disaster resiliency, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills and volunteerism towards community development.

All household-beneficiaries are assured of social protection, social assistance and social development services to usher them to "self-sufficiency level" by the end of 7 years. It will utilize the social case management to facilitate and engage beneficiaries in a mutually agreed intervention plan to support their compliance with the program conditions and achieve an improved level of well-being towards self-reliance.

Lastly, the program employs a graduation approach with the various partners from the NGAs, LGUs, CSOs/ NGOs. It aims to provide different levels of interventions through the case-referral pathways sustaining the self-resiliency of the beneficiaries and is able to cushion impact of political, economic and social shocks, and empowered to access services and structures providers. As part of this, the Kilos-Unlad (KU) is an innovative strategy to guide the process of shepherding 4Ps household-beneficiaries to achieve improved well-being toward stepping-up from survival to subsistence to self-sufficiency—out of poverty through the employment of individual/family cooperation, support group formation and community building through the convergence of programs and services within the social service delivery system.

Social Case Management on the KILOS UNLAD



Case management is defined by the 4Ps law as the process used by the DSWD to enable the qualified household-beneficiaries to improve their functioning by dealing with their difficulties specifically in complying with the terms of the Program. It shall refer to a mutually agreed process of assessing, planning, managing, coordinating and advocating for services and other interventions towards improving the well-being of households using the Social Welfare and Development Indicator (SWDI) and other-related tools

Currently, 4Ps is using a 7-year strategic social case management framework of the program known as the Kilos-Unlad (KU). Through KU, the program implementers are guided on how to steer the household beneficiaries to

improve their level of well-being within the 7-year operational timeline. It is a strategy to guide the process of shepherding 4Ps household-beneficiaries to achieve improved well-being toward stepping-up from survival to subsistence to self-sufficiency—out of poverty through the employment of individual/family cooperation, support group formation and community building through the convergence of programs and services within the social service delivery system. It also looks into the realities confronted by the household beneficiaries since there are these special and difficult situations such as child protection and gender-based violence issues that might hinder them in complying with the program conditions, or worse might backslide their level of well-being if case management is not applied.

“Bata Balik Eskwela” (BBE)

A total of 484,265 student-beneficiaries of 4Ps have returned to school through its **Bata Balik Eskwela (BBE) campaign** that aims to encourage children who stopped going to school to enroll again and value education. This number is from the program’s December 2019 data, and more student-beneficiaries are expected to enroll again and continue their studies.

The campaign’s target student-beneficiaries are referred as “Not Attending School” (NAS) children. Pantawid Pamilya’s data showed that there are 925,977 NAS children recorded from 2018 to February 2019. To address this issue and reinforce its mandate of keeping children healthy and in school, Pantawid Pamilya launched the BBE campaign last April 2019. The campaign’s theme ‘Edukasyon ay Mahalaga, Ito ay Ating Ipaalala’ underscores the importance of education in achieving ones’ dream and breaking the poverty cycle within the household.

Among these NAS children is Renalyn Tome of Zamboanga del Sur who stopped attending her classes because she got pregnant at 16

years old. Through the BBE campaign used as a case management strategy, Pantawid Pamilya reached out to Renalyn, assessed her situation, and encouraged her to go back to school by informing her of the options she could take to continue her studies.

“Our Municipal Link encouraged me to continue my studies. If (I could) not (go to a) regular school, I (could) choose to enroll in DepEd’s Alternative Learning System. I now commit to continue my studies so I can give my child a better future. I will (be) her inspiration to... finish her studies,” shared Renalyn.

COMPLEX ISSUES

The BBE campaign learned that school absenteeism is just a symptom of more complex gender-based child protection issues. It was found out that boys (60%) were affected more than the girls (40%), and most of them were within 15 to 18 years old. These children belong to multi-problem households that are afflicted by various



Representatives from Cebuana Lhuillier Foundation, Inc. (second and third from right) flanked by DSWD-7 employees donate school supplies for the Pantawid Pamilya's Bata Balik Eskwela advocacy campaign.

social problems, like poverty, unemployment, and abuses. Consequently, children lacked support and maturity to handle their complex and difficult circumstances. Renalyn, for instance, became a mother at a young age. She is not yet capable and mature enough to deal with parenthood thus her school attendance suffered.

Moreover, it was ascertained that these children are often forced to work, get pregnant early or co-habit. Worse, many of them are in high risk situations, suffering from different forms of gender-based violence, like physical and sexual abuses.

The campaign, spearheaded by Pantawid Pamilya's Gender and Development Division, understands the sensitivity that these

issues entail thus trained social workers and Pantawid Pamilya and DSWD staff are directed to manage the cases of affected student-beneficiaries.

PARTNERSHIPS AND GOOD PRACTICES

Pantawid Pamilya has identified some regional activities that have contributed to the success of the BBE campaign. One is maximizing the program's existing mechanisms at all levels (regional, provincial and municipal) to identify NAS issues and gaps and determine areas of collaboration with different social service workforce.

DSWD Ilocos Region engaged families and other stakeholders in the campaign and was able to bring 19,593 NAS children back to school— a whopping 291% of their target. These children are either enrolled to formal school or to Alternative Learning System/ Alternative Delivery Mode (ALS/ADM) in June 2019.

The regional office also developed the “Kahalagahan ng Edukasyon: A Bata Balik Eskwela Supplemental Module” used in the Family Development Sessions. Its consultation with the Department of Education (DepEd) led to the agency's commitment to strictly implement its Child Protection Policy to address the bullying incidence and provide appropriate interventions.

Further, Pantawid Pamilya City/Municipal Links collaborated with ALS teachers to enroll 3,315 working children to ALS/ADM. This gave working children a chance to continue their studies while helping provide for their families.

DSWD Eastern Visayas, meanwhile, conducted the case management with children and their families resulted to 817 home visits, 105 Case Conferences, 723 Focus Group Discussions, 97 counselling sessions, 122 information giving and case management sessions. These activities

aimed to understand the situations of NAS children and develop intervention plans with their families.

The City/Municipal Links in the region also worked with the ALS coordinators to also ensure the enrollment of overaged NAS children. The province of Leyte developed the Children Monitoring Tool that parents use in monitoring their children's school attendance.

In addition, DepEd and the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children introduced the BBE campaign through information caravans, orientations for ALS/ADM implementers, and joint home visitations. The private sector and civil society organizations were also tapped for school supply donations to support this back-to-school campaign.

Pantawid Pamilya regional offices are also lauded for providing counselling and life skills coaching for NAS children and their parents; creating referral pathways to ensure that the psychosocial needs of NAS children are properly dealt with; and ensuring that NAS children over 18 years old are referred to ALS or other productive options.

Through the BBE campaign, Pantawid Pamilya is not only bringing children back to school but also giving them another chance to achieve their dreams through education.

Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya Through the Years

In 2012, 4Ps launched the Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino to recognize family-beneficiaries who religiously comply with program conditionalities and demonstrate positive Filipino values and strong family ties (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, 2012). Through sharing the stories of complying family-beneficiaries, this activity was aimed at encouraging others to increase their compliance to program conditions and practice what they learned from the Family Development Sessions (FDS).

In 2013, 4Ps used the title “Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya,” and in 2014 it had its own awarding ceremonies conducted on Pantawid Pamilya National Family Day, which has been the major activity of 4Ps in observing the National Family Week every September, in pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No. 60 issued on September 28, 1992 (Official Gazette Website, n.d.)

Seven years since awarding its first national winner, the Search has not only been a platform to influence family-beneficiaries’ compliance to program conditions but it has also able to showcase the stories of family-beneficiaries who maintain strong family ties, demonstrate positive Filipino values, and create a positive

impact in their respective communities despite the challenges brought about by poverty.

The Search has given family-beneficiaries actual examples of how hard work, family togetherness, and the assistance from Pantawid Pamilya could lead to affirmative changes in their lives. It has become a venue to tell the public that family-beneficiaries could develop into more productive and dignified citizens and not just cash grant recipients.

Moreover, communicating the stories of these model families has helped in educating policymakers about the program’s impact and showing stakeholders that 4Ps resources are put into responsible use.

THE REGIONAL SEARCH

All 4Ps Regional Program Management Offices (RPMO) are required to conduct a regional search led by their respective 4Ps Information Officers. The regional search usually starts in May or earlier. Provincial nominees are selected to be the finalists in the regional level of the Search. The winning family serves as the

official nominee of the RPMO for the national competition.

RPMOs are required to submit their regional entries to the National Program Management Office (NPMO) on the set deadline (usually August). A regional entry includes a written story about the regional winner, photos/videos, copy of birth certificates, marriage certificates, certificates of participation in various community activities, certificates and awards of children/parents/family, and other documents that may be used as additional references to substantiate the nomination of the family.

THE NATIONAL SEARCH

The regional entries are sent to the NPMO for the national level validation and awarding. The NPMO invites representatives from different civil societies and NGOs to be the judges of the Search.

THE AWARDING

The awarding of the regional and national winners is conducted on the Pantawid Pamilya National Family Day celebration in September. They are given plaques, cash prizes and special gifts 4P’s partners, and they get to share a message to the guests and participants of the event. The awarding also includes media coverage to share their stories across the country.

All the grand winners take on the following roles:

1. Serve as ambassadors of the program
2. Act as resource persons in Family Development Session and Pantawid Pamilya-led activities where the families can share their knowledge and experience
3. Help in the advocacy efforts of the program through allowing the use of their photos, videos, and stories for the communication materials and accommodating media interviews.

THE HUWARANG PANTAWID PAMILYA (2012-2018)

Since 2012, the Search has produced seven grand winners or huwarang pamilya coming from five regions. Here are brief descriptions of what made them stood out from other regional contenders:

- 2012: Manarpaac Family (Batac, Ilocos Norte)
- 2013: Mabanta Family (Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte)
- 2014: Tanutan Family (Lemery, Iloilo)
- 2015: Achuela Family (Paoay, Ilocos Norte)
- 2016: Garay Family (Jagna, Bohol)
- 2017: Cabualan Family (Leon, Iloilo)
- 2018: Dionisio Family (Labo, Camarines Norte)

For 2019, the Search was evaluated to determine how it has changed the lives and how they used their experience as grand winners to further improve their lives and sustain their gains from the Program.

4Ps family-beneficiaries, including huwaran families or the grand winners of Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya found the communication activity as a good venue to share their stories and advocacies and a platform for the program to showcase its positive impact to beneficiaries and disprove accusations that it was a dole-out and had no real or observable effects to family-beneficiaries.

The winning’s impact stayed on huwaran families and their neighbors/co-beneficiaries, an indication that the Search was taken seriously by beneficiaries. However, popularizing the Search and its winners to a bigger audience (i.e. national level) was not established. The national level awarding was held “with a bang” but the impression was not sustained. The Search lacked activities that would help huwaran families carry out their roles as 4Ps ambassadors.

Although the co-beneficiaries of huwaran families were not able to articulate how they could emulate the huwaran families, the Search was able to plant a seed in their mind so they would be inspired by the huwaran families’ stories and believe that positive changes were also possible to them. The Search was not so much a life-changing experience to other family-beneficiaries but it succeeded in giving them a preview of the possibilities of what they could become in the future.

As with other projects and activities of the 4Ps, time and budget were contributing factors in the quality of Search implementation and outputs.

Imperfect but inspiring

Hailed as the first grand winner of the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya, the Manarpaacs from Batac City, Ilocos Sur still remember how they felt when they were awarded in 2012.

“Nagsama yung kaba at saya. Hindi ko ine-expect. Sa dinami-dami ng beneficiaries kami ang napili. Napakasaya namin,” said the 46-year old mother Leilani Manarpaac.

Her son Kaiser Dominic thought it was overwhelming to be awarded in front of so many people. He was only 14 years old then but he already knew that it was an honor for his family to be called “huwaran.”

Seven years since the momentous event in their lives, how are they doing now and how have they changed since?

THE FIRST NATIONAL WINNER

Even before they were proclaimed as the grand winner of the search, the Manarpaacs’ neighbors and co-beneficiaries have always seen them as extraordinary, *mabait*, and *matulungin*. The Manarpaac children, Kaiser and Kate, were also admired for being consistent honor students.

When the family won in the competition, their neighbors felt it was a success of the whole barangay. Finally, they thought, Brgy. Baligat has something to be proud of. The Manarpaacs have been in the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) since 2010. They are among the 1,630 4Ps households in Batac City.

“Masaya kami dahil dito sa barangay namin naipili yung winner. Kahit pobre kami nakamit

nila ‘yong title ‘yon,” said one of the family’s neighbors.

The Manarpaacs were awarded with a plaque and cash worth P15,000, which they used to buy a gas stove, rice, and kids’ school requirements. They have also been invited to share their story through media interviews and various city government and DSWD activities.

It was huge change in their lives because Leilani used to always just stay home and mind her own business. She learned about the value of community participation when she became a 4Ps beneficiary. The different training she attended and her responsibilities as a parent leader taught her how to speak to a big audience.

She said, “Noong una hindi talaga ako masyadong nakikisalamuha pero (ngayon) mas naging confident ako... Noon medyo kinabahan pero sa katagalan nasanay na rin.” Every time Leilani delivers her speech she makes sure to tell her co-beneficiaries to adhere to the objectives of 4Ps, follow its conditionalities, and do not be discouraged despite their hardships. Additionally, she wants her story to reach the critics of the program:

“Gusto naming ma-feature yung stories naming mga huwarang pamilya para maipakita sa mga bumabatikos sa programa na merong patunay na totoo na maraming natutulungan ang programa. Gusto naming maipakita sa kanila na ‘di lang kami umaasa sa program. May mga trabaho rin kami.”

But the most important impact of the search to her was changing her perspective about what one can do amid poverty:

“Hindi namin ine-expect na manalo pero na-realize din namin na hindi pala hadlang ang pagiging mahirap para maging winner or maging matagumpay ka sa isang bagay,” she said.

STRIVING FOR MORE

The Manarpaacs are definitely in a better position now. Kaiser is taking up BS Civil Engineering and will be graduating this year. He receives grants from Expanded Students’ Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA), a college education program of the national government for 4Ps children.

Kate, on the other hand, is a consistent honor student. She is also the class representative whenever there are competitions in school, like quiz bowls and talent shows.

As their expenses increase, Leilani and her husband Rommel double their efforts to

provide for their children. Rommel was able to get a good construction project in Santa, Ilocos Sur. He is a carpenter there and only goes home every weekend. The children appreciate the couple’s hard work even if it means being away from home for days.

Leilani supports his husband’s decisions even though it is not always easy for her to balance doing households chores, taking care of their children, and working without the *padre de familia*’s presence at home.

She and Rommel have decided that they will do everything for the future of their children. They do not want to go back to the time when they literally had nothing, even milk for young Kaiser.

Kate, meanwhile is now a junior high schooler, and she does everything she can to maintain her high grades. She wants to be an accountant someday.



Achieving dreams—slowly but surely

The Mabantas did not imagine winning the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya in 2013. They thought they were just a simple family from Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte who loves gardening and joining activities in their community.

Little did they know that their passions would earn them the title of huwarang pamilya.

“Unexpected po ‘yon. Sa dinami-daming kasali kami pa ‘yong nakuha... Pag-uwi namin maraming nag-congratulate na mga kakilala namin, kapit-bahay. Masaya sila kasi sa lahat ng beneficiaries ng 4Ps kami ‘yong nanalo sa buong Pilipinas,” said Helkent, the eldest among the five Mabanta siblings.

The Mabantas are known in their barangay for their home garden. Plants that bear fruits and vegetables were abound in their lot. After winning the search, people went to their house and were inspired to start their own home garden.

Six years after that momentous event, the Mabantas’ passion for gardening was shared to other communities as they started getting invitations from various government agencies and organizations asking Helen and her family to be resource persons in gardening training workshops.

The Mabantas have also joined other various pursuits, such as the local poverty reduction action team of their municipality, PAMANA (Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan), Kalahi-CIDDS (Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Services), and other groups and activities in and out of Brgy. Libertad.

According to Kauswagan Municipal Link Junaida Dimapandog, the family’s engagement in community activities and

the good relationship within the family have made them a true huwaran for all. They are a family that leads by example.

NEW ENDEAVORS

The Mabantas’ latest endeavor is a karinderya which gives additional income to their household. Helen enjoys her time here and meeting different people who patronize their delicious meals.

She said, “Okay naman (ang kita). Marami kaming nakakahalubilo. Meron pang galing Manila.”

The Mabanta siblings have grown up and beginning to have their own lives. Helkent, an agricultural entrepreneurship graduate, is now employed at the Department of Agriculture. As the eldest Mabanta child, he understands the need for him to play the role as “pangalawang magulang ng mga kapatid (ko)”.

He shared, “Tutulungan ko sila hanggang sa makakaya ko... (Bilang panganay minsan) gusto mong pumunta ng ibang lugar pero ‘di mo magawa dahil uunahin mo kapatid mo para makatapos. Uunahin (ko) si mama at papa para tulungan sila.”

Helqueen, the second child, is a criminology graduate and soon to be employed at Philippine National Police. The prize the Manarpaacs won during the national awarding of the search was used for her criminology board exam fee and requirements and other necessities in their house.

The other three children are still in high school and grade school.



“Gusto kong maging teacher (dito sa Libertad) para makatulong sa mga batang mabasa at magsulat,” said Heart Queencess the youngest among the Mabanta siblings.

Helen’s husband Rolando works as maintenance staff. Their combined incomes are being saved to send their younger children to college. They want their children to value education that will help them achieve their dreams.

“(Pangarap ko) makatapos sila ng pag-aaral kasi ‘di mawawala sa kanila ‘yan. ‘Pag bumili ka ng lupa, pag-aawayan ‘yan eh... Kahit ganito lang kami, mahirap ang trabaho ko... pero tinitii ko para makatapos sila,” said Rolando.

He added that he is so happy and proud of his eldest kids who have finished their college education.

STAYING COMMITTED

The Mabantas have shown that being a model family does not mean that they are free of troubles. They showed that amid the challenges, they are capable of being graceful and committed to taking care of each other and their community engagements.

Helen was a PAMANA volunteer in 2013 and became the chairperson of Kalahi-CIDDS’ Barangay Subproject Management Committee the following year. Her team’s proposal was building two evacuation centers because they reside in a flood-prone area.

To say the least, there had been challenges within their group that their project did not almost push through. But despite this, Helen’s sense of leadership and accountability prevailed and she chose to continue leading the group of volunteers and focus on the importance of their mission.

“Ako ang pumirma (sa mga papeles). Mahalaga sa amin ang project kasi (bumabaha) sa amin,” said Helen.

Aside from having a sense of commitment, Helen is inspired to work for the project because her family always supports her. During those times when Helen’s group was having problems, Heart Queencess was there to cheer her up. “Pinapatawa ko na lang siya,” she said when Helen was feeling down.

Helen and her husband Rolando’s passion for serving the community does not go in vain. In fact, it is one of the things that their children want to emulate from.

Helkent said, “Iyong tumutulong na walang kapalit. Tumutulong ka sa kapwa ng buong puso (at) hindi ‘yong may kapalit ‘yon ang gusto kong gayahin.”

The Mabantas enjoy learning from the training and seminars they attended, which were brought about by being a grand winner of the search. It became an instrument for them to show that poverty could be a driving force to help the community, join various activities, and learn new things.

More importantly, they are able to share the knowledge they gained from the initiatives they participate in.

Helen said, “‘Yong mga knowledge na nakukuha ko sa mga napuntahan ko shine-share ko sa mga anak ko para malaman nila mabuti talagang makihalubilo ka sa mga tao para marami kang malalaman.”

The Mabantas definitely has had a fair share of life’s ups and downs as they cross the bridge from poverty to being self-reliant. They know that making their dreams come true would take more time than they wanted but they are patient to take things one at a time.

Kick-starting the fight against poverty

Gibb Tanutan giggled as she shared a funny story on winning the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya in 2014.

She said a lot of people congratulated them, even those who they didn’t know personally. But some got quite confused on why Gibb’s family was on TV.

“‘Yong ibang tao iba ang pagkaintindi nila. Noong lumabas kami sa TV akala nila artista na kami,” the 19-year old recalled.

Gibb had to explain to her neighbors and strangers that her family was part of the search that recognizes exemplary Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) family-beneficiaries. That year, her family bested 14 families from different regions nationwide. She was in disbelief when her family was called on stage to receive the top prize.

The Tanutans becoming a celebrity on TV was definitely an anecdote that still makes Gibb laugh but seriously speaking, winning was not on her mind: “Hindi ko inakala na aabot kami dito.”

Her then 14-year old self could not quite comprehend how a poor, fatherless family from Lemery, Iloilo could be called a model family.

RAISED BY A SOLO PARENT

Gibb and her four brothers Ferdinand, Bryan King, Jaworski, and Jebbie grew up without a father who supposedly went to Manila to look for a job but never came home. The eldest, Ferdinand, was only 10 years old then. The sole responsibility of taking care all of them was left to Gemma, their mother. “May lima akong anak. Bilang solo parent na ina ng tahanan, sobrang hrap ng mga responsibilidad ko sa mga anak ko. Sobrang hrap na mag-alaga sa mga anak-- kung paano sila mapakain ng tatlong beses sa isang araw,” Gemma shared.

To provide for her family, Gemma sold vegetables and root crops and engaged in farming activities. These jobs did not pay much so she did not have enough to buy food and their other necessities, like baon and requirements for school.

But no matter how heartbreaking it was for her not to be able to afford the needs of her children, Gemma pressed on. She never stopped working because she had one dream for all her children: “Isa lang naman ang hinihiling ko – ang mabigyan sila ng edukasyon.”

Gibb and her brothers were not blind to the hardships of their mother who tried everything just to keep things going in their lives.

Gibb shared, “Hindi ko naramdaman na wala kaming tatay. Nagampanan (ni nanay) lahat ng responsibilidad niya sa amin. Noong bata pa lang ako hindi ko talaga alam ‘yong naranasan niya pero ngayon naiintindihan ko na. Napakahirap.”

Gemma felt relieved when they became part of the program, saying that she finally had an ally in providing for the health and education needs of her children. She saw the program as her “katuwang” in catering the needs of her children and “gabay” on how to raise them.

Gemma said, “Noong dumating ang Pantawid parang biglang (gumanda) ang paningin ko (sa buhay ng pamilya) ko dahil nakikita ko yung magandang dala sa amin ng programa.”

There are 1,592 4Ps households in Lemery, Iloilo.

Her children likewise felt inspired. Ferdinand, Bryan King, and Jaworski looked for college scholarships and part-time jobs so they could have money for school projects, books, and other college requirements. The cash grants from 4Ps were for the health and education of Gibb and Jebbie.

The three oldest siblings are now all graduates but it was not an easy accomplishment. After his graduation, Ferdinand helped Bryan King

go to college, and Bryan King made sure that Jaworski would also finish tertiary education. Gemma’s dream for her children is gradually coming true.

“Ngayong tapos nang mag-aral yung tatlo ko, nagpapasalamat ako sa Panginoon dahil nagkaroon ako ng anak na mababait na nagtutulungan. Bilang ina, magaan na sa akin yung mga ibang pangangailangan sa bahay,” she said.

Gemma is also proud that her family has learned to manage their finances properly. The cash prize they received from the Search was used to buy fertilizer for their palayan, which they acquired through a land loan from a bank.

A portion of the winning was also used to pay for paperwork and other requirements that his sons need to apply for a job.

ADVOCACIES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Gemma and her children felt that people treated them quite differently since winning the search. They thought they are given the kind of respect and appreciation that were not there before. People now wanted to hear their voice and include them in activities that would require decision-making.

“Magandang epekto sa amin (ng pagkapanalo namin). Sa school kasi nakita nila pwede kaming maging modelo. Pwede pala akong maging (PTA) officer. (Sa mga community activities), kahit na kasama ko malalaking tao, politiko, mayaman. (Dati) naisip ko hindi ako bagay (doon) pero siguro nakita nila sa ugali ko na pwedeng-pwede (ako na makilahok),” Gemma shared.

The Tanutans also treasure the lessons and learning they got from the program through the Family Development Session and the training seminars they attended.



Gemma said, “Noon wala akong alam, pero ngayon dahil sa knowledge na ibinahagi sa akin hindi na ko nahihiya. Yung mga binibigay na benepisyo lalo na yung mga tinuturo sa amin na adbokasiya ng program talagang inaapply ko sa pamilya ko (para magkaroon ng) education ang anak ko, may mabuting behavior, values, malapit sila sa Panginoon. Naging masipag kami at nagtulong-tulong.”

She has also seen changes in their community: “Dati ‘yong mga tao sa amin naglalaro ng braha, hindi naglilinis ng environment, kung magsalita bastos. Ngayon kasi parang dahil sa (programa), hindi na sila pasaway.”

Whatever she learns from the program and training she attended she puts them in her mind and heart and makes sure that she shares them to her neighbors and co-beneficiaries.

“Yung mga knowledge na nakuha hindi yan mawawala ishe-share ko sa nangangailangan. Active pa rin ako kahit wala nang program.” Gemma likewise commends how the program links beneficiaries to many opportunities and projects of other government agencies.

“Maganda yung programa lalo na pag may dumating na ibang ahensya ng gobyerno na nagbibigay tulong, priority ang Pantawid. Talagang nabigyan kami ng pansin.”

Gibb’s teachers also sees as her an exemplary student in their school. If students want

to do well in their class and pursue their dreams, the teachers advised they should be like Gibb. Because of this, she felt like she needs to demonstrate that she comes from a huwarang pamilya.

“Parang dapat ikaw yung mag-lead at ipakita na ikaw ang role model sa kanila,” said Gibb who is also part of the student council of Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College where she is taking up Bachelor of Elementary Education.

MOVING AHEAD

Looking back on their lives five years ago, Gibb can now finally make sense of what made them a huwarang pamilya. It was not just because her family is headed by a solo parent. It was definitely not the drama that came with an incomplete family. They are exemplary because they were able to empower each other and other families. If there is one thing she wants to give to her mother as a gift that would be to become one of the top students in her batch: “Ang sabi niya sa akin mag-cum laude daw ako kaya gagawin ko ‘yon para sa kanya.”

Gibb says this with confidence because she is positive that her hard work in school will be complemented by her family’s support and assistance from 4Ps.

Success through self-discipline

For the Achuelas, the grand winner of the 2015 National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya, self-discipline may not be easy but definitely doable and provides rewards.

Conrado Achuela and his four daughters understand that great opportunities do not always come by to poor families like them. That is why when they became Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) beneficiaries they vowed to do all they could to sustain the gains they get from it.

Conrado shared, “Noong elementary pa sila parang ‘di ko akalain na mararating nila ‘yong ganitong level of education kasi mahirap kumita ng pera noon. Nagpapasalamat ako nang mapasok kami ng DSWD na maging miyembro ng Pantawid Pamilya.”

Conrado’s wife died two months after their youngest was born, but his neighbors and relatives can attest that he does a great job in singlehandedly taking care of his children, as they all learned how to be obedient and industrious.

In 2012, 4Ps started helping him sending his children to school. His family from Brgy. Salbang, Paoay is one of the 17,767 4Ps households in Ilocos Norte.

Years later, the Achuelas started getting the breaks they needed to take off. Conrado’s eldest daughter Hazel was qualified for the Expanded Student Grant-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA), a college grant for 4Ps households. She took up BS Agriculture in Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) and graduated magna cum laude in 2017.

People in their community started recognizing the family’s perseverance and fruits of hard work.

“Mula noon hanggang maggraduate si Hazel, malaking tulong ‘yon. ‘Pag may nakakakita sa akin sa labas (sinasabi nila), ‘Congrats, may graduate ka na!’ Ganyan ang mga sinasabi ng tao lalo ng mga guro,” said the 62-year old father.

Hazel’s sisters are also achievers. Like her Ate Hazel, Amabel is taking up BS Agriculture in MMSU, while Fenelyn and Glenda are in 12th (MMSU-Science High School) and 9th grade (Salbang Elementary School), respectively.

All of them are able to balance their studies and enjoy extracurricular activities such as sports despite the demands of managing their household and farm and challenges of being poor.

After the Search, people were congratulating the Achuelas and telling them that they are an inspiration not only to their barangay but to the whole Ilocos region as well.

“(Binati nila kami), ‘Wow national winner!’ Tapos parang nag-serve kaming inspiration sa mga classmate namin,” Amabel shared.

The P50,000 cash prize from the Search was used for the Achuela’s education and livelihood. They bought a printer that the children now use for research papers and other school requirements.

The other portion of the prize was used for crop production and poultry farming, their major sources of income. Hazel shares to her father updated farming techniques and

technologies that she learned. These have been helpful in increasing their produce and raising chickens.

THE POWER OF DISCIPLINE

This sense of self-discipline is one of the things that made the Achuelas the national winner of the search when they bested 15 other families from different parts of the country.

The Achuela siblings always help their father in the farm. They do not mind the scorching heat and hard labor usually performed by men, because they understand that their father needs their assistance and has no budget to hire helpers.

“Yong labor po sa bukid (ay) mahal so initiative na naming tulungan siya instead na dagdag gastos pa na kukuha ng ibang tao na tutulong,” Amabel explained.

They also value farming and agriculture because they believe that “every butil counts.”

When it comes to household chores, Conrado proudly shared that he does not need to tell his daughters what to do because they have already divided domestic responsibilities.

The kids are also lauded for their academic excellence and for growing up caring and gentle even without their Nanay. They miss her, of course, but their father’s brand of care and love has able to fill the void they felt when she passed away. Conrado’s little acts make the biggest impact to the Achuela siblings.

Amabel said, “Naramdaman namin na hindi nawalan ng nanay ang pamilyang ito dahil nagawa ni Tatay na maging isang ina at ama... lalo na kapag kami ‘yong may sakit siya yung naglalaba ng damit namin, nilulutan niya kami ng pagkain. Sa gawain sa paaralan, siya yung nagtuturo sa amin ‘pag ‘di namin alam (‘yung lessons at assignments).”

“Ginagabayan niya kami tulad ng isang ina ng tahanan, sa mga decision-making, pagbibigay-payo tungkol sa buhay, sa studies namin. Importante po kasi yung mga pieces of advice kasi nararamdaman ng anak na nagga-guide yung tatay,” Hazel added.

The Achuela siblings constantly say that they admire their father for being disciplined. Conrado makes a conscious effort to be a role model to his children because according to him “kung ano ang ginagawa ng ama ‘yon din ang ginagawa ng anak.”

Hazel explained that building self-discipline helps them focus on their goals such as graduating from college, getting a good-paying job, and lifting their family out of poverty. She was able to demonstrate this self-discipline two years ago when she was reviewing for the Agriculture Licensure Exam while working as an instructor at MMSU. Her determination paid off as she was among the top ten exam passers.

The Achuela siblings understand that the rewards outweigh the inconveniences they experience when they work hard. After her stint as an instructor in MMSU, Hazel applied for a master’s degree in the University of the Philippines Los Baños with a DOST scholarship.

“Kahit malayo sa pamilya, ano ba naman ‘yong two and a half years kung ang kapalit noon ay to alleviate the family from poverty?” she shared, adding that she needs a master’s degree to qualify for a regular teaching position in any university.

Self-discipline likewise helps the Achuelas deal with the pressure that comes with being a huwaring pamilya. Since becoming the grand champion of the Search they are now in the public eye, attending various events of their LGUs and DSWD Ilocos region and accommodating media interviews.

Fortunately, they do not have to give more effort to become hard-working and behave extraordinarily nice because they have

always behaved that way even before joining the Search.

Self-discipline keeps them grounded and respectful to others no matter where they go. As 15-year old Glenda put it, “Kung disipinado ka dito sa bahay, mas disipinado ka sa ibang lugar.”

MOVING FORWARD

Winning the Search could be like a badge they wear that confirms the family’s admirable traits but for the Achuela siblings it was an additional stimulus to do their best in school.

Conrado shares that since the awarding his daughters have become more inspired to study and motivated not to miss any school activities. They keep on studying especially after they attended the awarding. He also brought another honor in the family when he became Ilocos Region’s representative in Pantawid Pamilya’s Search for Modelong Ama, an advocacy activity for 4Ps male clients who champion gender equality in their respective homes and communities.

The Achuelas hope that other family-beneficiaries will find inspiration from their story; that despite the struggles they have encountered, they were able to rise above every challenge through hard work, faith in God, patience, and perseverance.

“Anuman ang mangyari sa buhay keep moving kasi hindi natin alam ang mangyayari sa atin in the future na magiging successful din tayo. Whatever happens we have to keep holding on to our dreams kasi yung goals natin sa buhay ‘yon ang nagbibigayng direksyon sa atin,” said Hazel.



Pamilya Garay: Gallant, gleeful, and goodhearted

Just like the delicacy called calamay of Jagna, Bohol, the Garays are sweet to each other and they stick together despite the challenges they encounter. The huwaran family from Jagna, Bohol showed that a family's love can do so much not only in their own home but in their community as well.

Vicente, the padre de familia of the 2016 grand winner of the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya shared how their life was changed by their faith and love for each other.

The father of seven said, "Dati ang relationship namin sa mga anak namin... medyo walang disiplina. Palagi (silang) lakwatsa noong una kasi kaming mag-asawa, (madalas ang) lakwatsa at bisyo, kaya ganoon din sila."

But he and his wife Marissa changed their ways, something that they credit to the faith they found and to the love of their children who inspired them to pick themselves up.

They changed and never looked back to their old life when all they did was "inom-inom lang, sugal-sugal sa tabi-tabi".

"Si Lord ang nagbigay ng daang matuwid. 'Pag nandiyan... sa bisyo wala (tayong) magagawa (na mabuti)," he said.

This story of transformation became an inspiration to many family-beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), especially those from Jagna province with 1,144 4Ps households.

Vicente that through the Search, "(mas) nagkadireksyon kami. 'Di namin akalain na sa 4Ps magsisimula."

Fast forward to 2019, the Garays continue inspiring their neighbors and co-beneficiaries through nourishing their love for their family, serving their community, and working hard to improve their well-being.

LOVING EACH OTHER MORE

"Sobrang saya. Napakaraming pagbabago sa aming pamilya. Kung noon mahal, ngayon mahal na mahal (namin ang isa't-isa)," said Marissa on how they had been since winning the search.

And this love nurtures the Garay children who are all growing up and starting to live their dreams. Ivy, the eldest among the seven children, is now a licensed electrical engineer. She works at a solar energy company in Cebu City.

Next to her is Rose Marie who is soon-to-be a teacher after her stint as a barangay daycare worker. Prince, the third child is a freshman electrical engineer student. The three youngest Garay kids are Aria Venice (10th grader), Lee Mark (7th grader), and Vic (two years old).

But the kids are not the only ones who are growing. Vicente and Marissa have also taken various roles in the community that allow them to serve and acquire new skills as leaders in Brgy. Can-upao.

Marissa narrated: "Noon isa lang akong purok president ngayon purok kagawad na sa barangay. Kapag may (barangay) hearing nai-invite ako ni kapitan na taga-lead ng prayer at nagka-counselling ako sa (parties involved)."



Vicente, meanwhile, is a lay minister in their church and a presider to Sunday services held in far-flung areas.

The day before the interview, the couple attended an ERPAT (Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities) seminar in Tagbilaran City that trained them to be future facilitators.

Vicente said, "Malaking pagbabago sa dati at ngayon... Dati gabi-gabi, araw-araw nasa laot (para mangisda), ngayon 'di na palagi pero nangigisda pa rin... Kahit anong kayod noong una, wala talaga. Ngayon, nandiyan sa atin ang pagbabago."

In the midst of these changes, the couple always prioritizes their children's studies.

"Kahit mahirap lang kami basta ang mga anak namin makatapos ng pag-aaral. Kasi wala kaming bahay, wala kaming pera, wala kaming lupa na maiiwan sa kanila (maliban sa) edukasyon... kasi hindi (ito) mananakaw kahit kanino," Marissa shared.

A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD

The Garays joined a group formed for a livelihood project, care of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Their group decided to put up a sari-sari store that offers ingredients and tools for making calamay, bigas, and other household products. To abide to their life free from vices, the Garays made sure that they won't be selling cigarettes and alcohol.

The sari-sari store has been doing well. In fact, their group was able to recover their capital in just three months, and other SLP groups from various barangays go to Brgy. Can-upao's SLP sari-sari store to learn good practices.

The biggest challenge, however, is maintaining the commitment of each member to help around the sari-sari store.

Vicente shared, "Sa umpisa nagtutulungan kami sa paggawa. Walang suweldo. Kinabukasan, 'di na sila bumalik. Mahirap 'pag 'di kayo pasensyoso."

But the Garays are determined to run the business even though they get minimal help from other members. They knew they have to lead by example thus they persevere so the others will realize that their livelihood has a chance of becoming successful.

This attitude reflects the Garays' sense of responsibility in everything that they do. "Pag 'di ka gumawa lahat tayo babagsak," said Vicente.

WEATHERING CRITICISMS

Being hailed as the grand winner of the Search made their neighbors and co-beneficiaries proud of the Garays' achievement. Many people celebrated with them but there were those who questioned their suitability of the title.

Vicente related, "'Yong iba sabi, 'Bakit kayo pa? Ang daming tao dito sa Bohol.' (Pero ang search ay) galing sa barangay, province, region, nakarating ng national. Hindi namin akalain. Dati hindi tayo (napapansin) dahil nandoon tayo sa ibaba. Pero nang manalo kami, ang dami nang pumapansin."

The good thing about the attention they were getting is they are able to share lessons they learned from their past and from attending Family Development Session and training activities.

"Ang daming nagpunta dito, nagpapa-advise. 'Brod ano bang gagawin ko?'... Hindi naman ako adviser. Sharing lang, kung anong

natutunan natin. I-share natin sa kapwa tao. Kahit na sa malayong barangay may nakakakilala sa akin," said Vicente.

But for Rose Marie the title "huwarang pamilya" bears the pressure of becoming a perfect citizen, especially to her and her siblings.

She explained, "Unexpected ('yong pagkapanalo) kasi sa dinami-daming (contestant) hindi ko naisip kami 'yong mananalo.... Para sa akin noong nanalo kami (isa itong) malaking pressure. Kung 'yong pamilya namin tinawag na 'huwarang pamilya', kaming mga anak dapat huwaran din kami sa ibang tao."

But she knows better than to focus on the negative implications of the title. She understands that having that title also inspires them to do their best when they serve others.

"Tina-try ko rin na maging huwaran kasi isa rin akong daycare worker so kailangan kong maging magandang ihemplo sa mga bata," she added.

There is no perfect family and the Garays do not intend to become one. Winning the Search gave them opportunities for development as well as criticisms from other people but the Garays very well know what to do: move forward and continue serving their community with resolute drive and passion.

As with any progress in life, the Cabualan siblings had mixed emotions about moving to a new house. On one hand, they felt happy and triumphant because the concrete house represents their hard work. It is sturdier than the one they used to live in which their parents built more than two decades ago using wood, bamboo, and light materials.

But on the other hand, they were melancholic because they felt that the memories of their childhood, both the good and difficult times, also went away when the old house was took down.

"Parang hinahanap-hanap mo 'yong feeling ng dating bahay. Kahit na ganoon lang 'yon (masaya kami) because of the memories. Parang every corner of that house nakikita mo iyong struggle mo (doon)," said Rizza, the eldest Cabualan child, who lived in the old dilapidated house for 25 years.

But the longing was fleeting. Rizza and her other siblings knew that having a new house trumps their sentimentality. It is more spacious and safer to live in. They will not have to worry as much as they did when they were in the old residence during rainy season.

The 26-year old University of the Philippines graduate loosened up and smiled, "This (house) is actually for our parents. We're happy na naipundar iyong bagong bahay. We still have a lot of plans (with it)."

Part of the budget used in building the new house was from the cash prize the Cabualans received as the grand winner of the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya in 2017. But aside from having a new house, the Cabualans have experienced a lot of shifts since declared as the most outstanding

4Ps family, not just in Leon, Iloilo but in the country.

UNCONVENTIONALLY INSPIRATIONAL

The Cabualans' story of *pagbabalik* makes them stand out from typical families. Couple Remia and Romulo used to be part of an underground movement before they started a family. After eight years of hiding and running away from the military they decided to surrender to lead a new life.

They were given amnesty in 1995 and took part in the community integration program. The adjustment of reintegration was not easy but gradually the community and their respective families welcomed them back.

Since then, the couple has become advocates of peace and development. Both of them had served as tanod members and Remia was chosen as Tanod Commander by their Punong Barangay to help maintain peace and order in Barangay Tina-an Norte.

The couple was blessed with six children: Rizza, Sarra, Nino, Jessa, Jodel, and Japeth. They had high hopes and beautiful dreams for their family when they rejoined the community, but life proved to be difficult for people like them who did not finish school.

Not having a sustainable source of income made it hard for them to take care of six kids. "(Kaming) mag-asawa mula kami sa walang-wala. Hanggang dumating ang aming mga anak. Lahat ng kahirapan, lahat ng trials sa buhay – kung minsan nadadapa din ako – pero pilit kong bumabangon hindi para sa akin pero para sa mga anak ko," said Remia. Despite the unconventionality of their story,



the couple is grateful that they were blessed with kind and understanding children who never once felt embarrassed by their parents' past.

Rizza shared, "One of my friends (asked me), 'How does it feel na you have parents na rebel returnees? It came to a point ba na ikinahiya mo sila?' I told them na hindi. There was never a chance or a time na ikinahiya ko sila. Sabi nila nakakatuwa kasi si nanay yung team leader ng tanod dito sa Leon. Malalaman mo na siya ang nagse-serve na taga-maintain ng peace and order dito sa community."

STARTING OVER

In 2011, the Cabualans experienced another defining moment as they became 4Ps beneficiaries. The program has helped the younger children go to school and pay attention to their health. It also helps the couple to have improved self-confidence to share their advocacy on peace and development.

Finally, the Cabualans were starting to make their dreams real as education became more accessible to them.

Aside from Rizza, Sarra is also now a college graduate and working in a private company. Niño, a graduating BA in English student in Western Visayas University shared that their

story surprises those who doubted their ability to attend college:

"Nagsimula kami sa walang-wala so people tend to judge na wala kang patutunguhan hanggang college ka lang or not even college. But we proved na may mararating kami. May lugar kami in this community."

The younger Cabualans also promised their parents to graduate from college and to help lift their family from poverty. Jessa, 19, is now a first year college student of Iloilo Science Technology University - Leon Campus. Jodel, 16, aspires to be a lawyer someday. She is now in grade 10 at Buga National High School; and Japit, 14, grade 9 at Elementary School.

MORE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Two years felt like a short period of time but many has changed in the Cabualans, other than having a new house, since winning the Search. Remia, for one, has become more active and in demand in their community as member of different organizations.

"Medyo busy sa invitations (bilang) guest speaker minsan and attend sa mga meeting. Halos lahat ng organisasyon sa bayan namin napasukan ko na. Lahat ito walang sahod, volunteer (ako)," Remia shared.

Her being dedicated and trustworthy has started to reach people outside her barangay as she was elected president of the Tanod Federation of Leon Province. The area has 1,842 4Ps households.

Her better half Romulo is always there to assist her and make sure that she is safe as being a tanod is risky and dangerous. He used to be a tanod as well but his health condition prohibits him from continuing the job.

Remia's voluntary work definitely helps her community but she could not help but feel guilty whenever she has to prioritize work over her family. Whenever she thinks of quitting she asks herself, "Paano na ang katahimikan ng barangay?"

But the Cabualan siblings do not mind. They understand their parents' passion for serving the community even though they are also busy working at a construction company. If it was up to them, they would rather have their parents stay at home, relax, and do voluntary works whenever it is convenient to them. But whenever they pitch this idea to their parents, it is always turned down.

Rizza shared, "Gusto sana namin kahit mag-sari-sari store pero ayaw nila... Sabi nila as long as kaya ng katawan namin, we will continue to work."

A TRUE HUWARANG PAMILYA

The Cabualans already claimed their so-called '15 minutes of fame' when they were proclaimed as the grand winner of the Search and appeared in televised news. The awarding was short-lived but their being huwarang pamilya did not end in Muntinlupa Sports Complex where the awarding ceremonies was held. They knew they have to live up to the title.

Remia explained, "Sa akin (may) pressure. Paano ko paninindigan ang pagiging huwarang ina? Bilang isang modelong ina? Mahirap para sa akin kasi 'yung titulo nito may kaakibat na responsibilidad."

She understands the gravity of bearing the title that is why she advises her children to continue their good work and uphold cooperation as a family even after the Search. "Masaya (kami noong nanalo) pero may pressure din sa amin to maintain the image of huwarang pamilya. Hindi ka naman magpapaka-hyprocrite na sinasabi mo (mag-aaral kang mabuti) tapos wala ka naman palang patutunguhan," said Niño, adding that this also made them "driven and motivated" to do well in school.

And for Jodel, she heard her teachers telling her classmates "na tularan kami, gawin kaming inspiration."

All the same, the Cabualans welcome the pressure and the opportunities to share their advocacies that came with winning the Search. They have been to various events, training seminars, and gatherings to tell their story and remind them, especially their co-beneficiaries, to follow 4Ps' conditionalities.

Remia told them: "Aalagaan ninyo mga anak niyo; pag-aralin ninyong mabuti. Itong programa bihira lang ito at tsaka 'di natin alam kung kailan hiinto. Habang mayroon pa dapat alagaan nating mabuti."

The Cabualan siblings have also started looking after their younger cousins who need help to continue their education and doing volunteer work. "Sabi nga nila, pay it forward," said Rizza who is planning to start volunteer work this year.

Niño, meanwhile, joined the Sangguniang Kabataan. He credited their being a huwarang pamilya as one of the factors he won in the election. "Manifestation (iyon na

I am) credible and has potential kaya I was elected as SK chairperson.”

The Cabualans are doing everything to sustain their gains from the program especially now that the older children are earning. Remia explained that it is important for them to make the investment of 4Ps to them worth it:

An inspiration to all

“Maayo sa kulay, maayo sa buhok, maayo sa katauhan ung sa tao. Kung gusto niyo talagang maging successful, go and go lang po. Go nang go!”

This was the message of the Dionisios to the family-beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) after winning the grand prize of the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya 2018.

The Dionisios are the first indigenous peoples (IP) family who bagged the national award as their story of perseverance and determination amid the discriminations they receive from being “different” in the community made them admired by people, IPs and non-IPs alike.

EDUCATION VS POVERTY

The Dionisios experienced discriminations because of being a Kabihug or Agta. Kabihug literally means “friend” but the Dionisios found themselves not welcome in many areas. Kabihugs are itinerant thus they move from one place to another. The Dionisios were treated viciously because of their skin color, hair, height, and lifestyle.

The Dionisios were forced to move house at least twice because they were labeled

“Tulong-tulong kami sa mga hindi pa nakatapos. Hindi lahat ng oras aasa tayo sa gobyerno. Hindi palagi aasa tayo dapat marunong tayong tumayo sa sarili nating paa.”

as “magnanakaw, maninilip, mangkukulam,” said Marites Dionisio. People destroyed their home. Worse, these confrontations often led to physically hurting them.

After two relocations the Dionisios found a home in Brgy. Gala in Labo, Camarines Norte. Their neighborhood gave the family a chance to live peacefully and show that IPs are human beings too that deserve respect.

Marites shared, “Akala nila ‘yong pisikal naming anyo (na ang buong katauhan namin). Para sa akin, tignan ninyo ‘yong puso namin kasi busilak ‘yan. ‘Yong mga bagay na nakikita panlabas lang ‘yon.”

Kabihug communities are found in the mountains of Camarines Norte and other parts of Bicol where education and health facilities are inaccessible. Wherever they go, Kabihugs are called ignorant or *walang muwang*.

Wency, Marites’ husband said, “(Gusto namin mabago) ‘yong pagiging mahirap, mahiyain (kasi) ‘pag nakakita kami ng hindi namin kauri nahihiya kami.”

Even before they knew each other Marites and Wency realized this kind of perception had to stop. They looked for ways to get tertiary education. Wency became a working

student at Camarines Sur Agricultural State College where she met Marites who, through a scholarship, completed a vocational course in entrepreneurship.

Years later she graduated with a bachelor of science in education. Wency, on the other hand, was able to attend three years of college.

It was a never-heard-before story: a Kabihug getting a college education. A difficult yet possible accomplishment that showed that Kabihugs are capable of attaining education which they could use in improving their situation.

Wency shared that people were inspired by their perseverance and told themselves, “Kung sila na Kabihug kinaya nila, kaya rin natin.”

Before joining the Search, Marites was an alternative learning system volunteer that

taught other Kabihugs. Wency, meanwhile, is employed until now as a tribal assistant at the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in Daet, Camarines Norte.

The couple’s passion for education was passed on to their three children, Mary June (17), Marvin (14), and Mary France (11). Mary June is now in grade 11 and plans to be teacher. Her younger siblings Marvin and Mary France dream to be a seaman and nurse, respectively.

Unfortunately, they are not spared from being teased in school because of their physical appearance and being minorities.

Despite this, the Dionisio kids refused to be bullied and went to school anyway. Mary June said they did not want to miss a class because “gusto (naming) makapagtapos (ng pag-aaral).” Every day when they go to school they bring with them their parents’



three essential pointers in life: “sipag, tiyaga, (at) huwag kalilimutang manalangin,” said Mary June.

Promoting the rights of IPs through bringing education close to their tribesmen was one of the exemplary deeds of the Dionisios that made them the National Search for Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya champion in 2018.

Less than a year since winning, many changes have already taken place in their lives, including earning the respect of many people and getting through difficult adjustments to give way to a better living condition.

EARNING THE RESPECT OF OTHERS

Being the Huwarang Pantawid Pamilya grand winner put the Dionisios on the spotlight. Their story was shared on TV, social media, and various activities in the Bicol region.

Wency said that the Search was the bridge that connected their advocacy to the beneficiaries of 4Ps. Winning was a huge deal, he said. “Dati ‘di kami napapansin na may ganoon kaming adhikain na makatulong sa kapwa. Naging tulay talaga na ma-share namin yung kaalaman namin (sa iba).”

There are 4,695 4Ps households in Labo, Camarines Norte. In Bicol region, 5,616 4Ps households have Kabihug/Agta members.

But the Dionisios couldn’t care less about the attention. What is important is that people, especially the Kabihugs, are starting to believe in them and in their advocacy.

Wency said, “Yong mga katribo namin dito nahikayat na mag-aral at (naniwala na) kahit

kami ganito na Agta, (naisasakatuparan) namin ‘yong kagustuhan na makapagkamit ng edukasyon. Noong mapanood nila kami (sa TV nagsumikap) silang mag-aral dahil na-inspire sa kuwento namin.”

Marites, who is planning to take up a master’s degree, encourages her friends and neighbors to never stop learning and acquiring new knowledge because according to her “ang edukasyon naman ay walang limitasyon.”

While the Dionisios urge others to be a dreamer and ambitious, it is also equally important to them to have honor in achieving their goals. Wency gave a compelling insight on this:

“Nakarating kami ng national awarding dahil sa gawa namin na hindi kami lumalamang sa ibang tao. ‘Yun ang pinakaayaw ko ang manlamang sa kapwa ko. Sinisikap kong matuwid ang gawa ko dahil (sa) mga anak ko (dapat) huwaran ako. Balang araw (yung tama rin) ang gagawin nila. Gusto ko ang kainin ng mga anak ko ay ‘yong pinagpawisan ko.”

LITTLE SACRIFICES

On March 2019, Marites got a new job as an NCIP tribal affairs assistant in Camarines Sur. She helps IPs or members of indigenous cultural communities to acquire certificate of confirmation that may be used for tribal identification, scholarship, employment, land matters and others.

Having a job that allows her to reach more IPs not only reinforces her sense of purpose but builds her confidence as well. For one, she feels empowered receiving her salary using her ATM card.

“Di ako talaga nagpindot (cash withdrawal) sa Pantawid. Noong unang suweldo ko naramdaman ko ganito pala ‘pag isa kang empleyado. ‘Pag nagpindot ka diyan tapos lalabas na iyong pera kitang-kita mo kung magkano,” she excitedly shared.

As ordinary as it may be but using an ATM gives her some kind of control in her life as she can decide on how much money the machine should dispense and whether to check her account balance, transfer funds, or change her card PIN that only she could know. It sounds trivial but she wants all IPs to experience this kind of privilege and confidence too.

These developments in the lives of the Dionisios, however, come with difficult adjustments. Camarines Sur is at least three-hour bus ride away from Labo, Camarines Norte so to save on transportation costs, Marites only goes home on weekends. Her children initially hated this setup.

Mary France was happy that her mother got a new job but she was used to having their mother beside them every time they needed her. “Lagi na lang siyang umaalis. ‘Di ko na siya nakakasama,” the youngest Dionisio cried.

Mary France’s ate and kuya felt the same. Marites missed a PTA meeting and the moving-up and recognition ceremonies

of the kids where they got special awards. But the couple had to explain to the kids that it was for their future. They understood eventually and promised their parents that they will always do their best in school so Marites can attend next year’s recognition ceremonies.

It is not also easy for Marites to be away from home especially when self-doubt creeps in. She may be part of a group that works toward the same goal yet she sometimes feels she does not belong: “Pakiramdam ko nanliliit ako. Kasi yung salita (at) kilos nila ramdam ko na iba sa akin.”

But she keeps going because the fight isn’t only for her and her family. Together, they dream that it would be a norm to have education and livelihood opportunities for IPs available at all times, in Bicol and ultimately nationwide.

On behalf of the Dionisio family, Wency wanted to impart a message to all Kabihugs: “langat natin ang lahi natin na isang katutubo. Ang pagiging mahirap hindi ‘yan hadlang sa edukasyon at kinabukasan ng isang tao. Obigasyon ng magulang na suportahan (ang kanilang anak) para sa susunod na henerasyon mabawasan ang hindi marunong.”

MOLDING EMPOWERED CHILDREN AMBASSADORS: 7 years of Pantawid Pamilya Exemplary Child

Beyond keeping children from poor households healthy and in school, Pantawid Pamilya also recognizes the discipline and efforts of its children beneficiaries who set excellent examples at home, in school, and in their community.

The National Search for Exemplary Pantawid Pamilya Children has been a venue to mold children ambassadors and advocates of the program. This has become an entry point to the National Children's Congress (NCC), an activity designed to equip exemplary children beneficiaries with knowledge and skills for them to reach their full potential as members of Pantawid Pamilya households and as advocates of health and education.

A voice for everyone

The Search started in 2012 where Patrick John Baylon, a Pantawid Pamilya beneficiary from Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro was proclaimed as the first grand winner. Known in their community for joining various singing competitions, Patrick also learned that he can use his love for music in voicing out various concerns of challenged children like him.

Now, Patrick dreams on becoming a social worker and give back to those who believed in him. The experience of becoming the 1st Pantawid Pamilya National Exemplary Child molded his compassion for other children. This led him to be more active in student organizations, and pushed his drive to help other children especially in boosting their confidence to share their talents.

Never alone

In 2013, a consistent top honor student in school and a front-runner representative in different activities also topped the National Search for Exemplary Pantawid Pamilya Children. Shemiah Pineda who lives with her grandparents together with her two siblings had to step up when their parents separated when she was only 10 years old. This major setback prompted them to go back in their hometown in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro while their mother works as a helper in Pasay, City.

Even up to now, Shemiah looks at the experience as a great opportunity which recognized her achievements and aspirations. After winning, she continued her



Molding Empowered

(From left to right) Exemplary Children Jay Mark, Arah, Reynald, Jimuel and Shania are joined by DSWD Assistant Secretary Glenda Relova (wearing brown stripes blouse) and 4Ps National Program Manager Director Gemma B. Gabuya (in eyeglasses) during the annual celebration of the Araw ng Kabataan held in Pasig City.

studies in her preferred school. Shemiah also shared that the Search boosted her pride in doubling her efforts in school and never felt alone in this journey. She is now a Civil Engineering student in the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP).

Leadership that stands out

Jemuel Steven Mago of San Agustin, Romblon was nicknamed "Mayor" by his fellow contenders for his active participation during workshops and activities in the NCC 2014. Although being bullied for being a tricycle driver's son, Jemuel stood up for his family and never allowed the mockery put him down.

After winning the 2014 Search, his classmates looked up to Jemuel as a model. Now, he happily shared that this experience was very fulfilling. "Labis akong nasayahan sa pangyayaring iyon dahil napatunayan ko

sa sarili ko na hindi hadlang ang kahirapan para maging isang modelo at makatulong sa kapwa estudyante o tao." Jemuel continues to be on top of his class and be a "huwarang anak" as he describes it to his parents.

A fisherman's son sails through victory

Jake Lere Boyles is the fourth child among seven of Bartolome, a fisherman, and Armida, housewife who sells puto, moron, and other kakanin. At a young age, Jake envisions a better and prosperous life for his family. He graduated in Tigdaranao Elementary School as the class valedictorian and received various awards such as the Congressional Academic Excellence Award and Leadership Award in March 2014. He is an active leader at school and was elected twice as President of the Student Pupil Government Organization. He is also an active member of the Boy Scouts Organization which enhanced his leadership skills.

From Ripples to Wave

Jeke Lere, now 17 years old, is currently in Grade 11. He shared that being an Exemplary Child is a very humbling experience especially the chance to share his story to other children during events and other gatherings. Jeke Lere always reminds his peers to always stand tall and be firm with their dreams, because we can always find guidance by being positive in life.

Dedication to be an inspiration

Through his active involvement in the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children, and other voluntary community service, Reynald Baguio of Dipolog wants to serve as an inspiration to other children in his community. One of the Baguio clan's triplets, this school achiever wants to go beyond learning inside the classroom. He wants to dedicate his knowledge and talents for the greater good of his family and community.

Reynald almost gave up the national search after suffering an arm injury weeks before the activity. But overcoming this, and eventually being awarded as the 2016 Pantawid Pamilya National Exemplary Child boosted his confidence and became much eager in joining different scholastic and extra-curricular activities. He also served as a resource speaker during parent trainings on their obligations in protecting the rights of children.

An eye-opener for the marginalized

"Walang mahirap, sa batang may pangarap." These are the exact words delivered by Jecille Arah Ms. Costales of Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro, the Pantawid Pamilya

National Exemplary Child 2017. As she strives on becoming a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), this consistent honor student also works on her advocacy for the Indigenous Peoples (IP). On Arah's final presentation for the Search, she focused on the realities being experienced by an IP community especially during elections, and disaster response.

Arah shared that winning the Search opened many doors for her especially in voicing out her advocacy in achieving her vision of a "pantay-pantay na pamumuhay." Through different guesting and learning activities, Arah believes that this opportunity not only improved her knowledge and skills as a child but a child with a purpose in life.

A selfless dream

Jay Mark C. Gac-ang of Kapatagan, Lanao del Norte dreams of becoming a lawyer someday to be an instrument in making justice accessible to everyone, especially those who cannot defend themselves. Jay Mark banks on enriching his knowledge on children's rights and spreading respect among his peers in order to strengthen the foundation of his dreams of a lawful society. Guided by a positive outlook in life, he believes that there's hope for everyone.

After winning the 2018 Search, Jay Mark was given an opportunity to take his acceptance speech in the Municipality of Kapatagan's flag ceremony followed by a motorcade in his community. He shared that as the Pantawid Pamilya National Exemplary Child 2018, he will work hard to serve as a model student and individual that values respect above everything else.

Sa mga kinatawan ng pamunuan ng World Bank, sa kawani ng DSWD, sa organizers, sa mga pamilyang naimbitahan, sa aking mga kakilala, kaibigan, pamilya, at sa lahat nang nakaririnig ng aking tinig, isang mapagpala at mapagpalayang araw sa lahat.

Ako ay isang batang minsan na ring nangarap nang napakataas. Nangarap ako gaya ng isang agila. Kung gaano katarik ang kanyang paglipad sa himpapawid at kung paano niya ibuka ang kanyang mga pakpak. Walang takot sa pagbayo ng mga hangin upang makita ang ganda ng karagatan at masulyapan ang paraiso sa likod ng mga kabundukan. Ang paraisong kailanman ay hindi ko naranasan maging sa panaginip ay hindi ko natagpuan. Sa paglipad ay pinagkaitan, walang matanaw kundi kadiliman, karahasan, kaguluhan at hindi mabunyagan ang sikat ng araw. Walang lakas upang matakasan ang sumpa ng kahirapan at maipagpag ang putik sa aming katawan.

Pagtulog sa gabi isa lamang ang laging dasal, mairaos ang isa na namang napakahabang araw bukas. Ni hindi alam ang gagawin, kung saan susuot na butas upang ang kalam ng sikmura ay magkaroon lamang ng lunas. Isang de lata sa buong maghapon at isa't kalahating bigas, sapat na ito upang sakit

ng tiyan nami'y malanggas. Isang kahig, isang tuka kung kanilang ituring, biyaya na ang pagkain ng tatlong beses ay katagpuin. Maraming dinadanas na hirap bagomo anihin, ang lahat ng pagpapagal, isang pawis isang butil. Ganito itinayo ang sistema sa ibaba, kung wala kang lakas at kusa, mamatay kang dilat ang mata't inaagnas, patibayan ng loob, patigasan ng kalamnan. Ako ang agilang pinanday na sa hirap ng buhay.

Ako din ang agilang walang kuko, walang tapang at walang lakas. Agilang gutom, pagod at paspas sa hirap. Lupaypay. Walang anumang kakayahan makaalpas sa karukhaang nakasakal sa aking leeg. Kahirapang dekada ko nang dinadaing, nagsusumigaw sa sakit at hapding aming naranasan. Hindi ako makapiglas sa taling nakapulupot sa aking buong katawan. Taling nagpapahina sa akin, taling kumukuha ng aking lakas, taling nag-iiwan ng lamat sa aking mga kamay. Ang taling kung saan matagal ko nang ninais makawala. Makaalis kung anuman ang kinasadlakan naming nang lubha.

Ngayon ito na ako, ang agilang humuhusay sa pagdaan ng panahon at sa suporta ng gobyerno. Agilang sinuutan ng tapang at binihisan ng katatagan ng loob. Ang aking



“Ang kahirapan ay hindi sapat maging hadlang bagkus ito ang ating gawing inspirasyon upang abutin ang mga pangarap.” David Manansala.

David Manansala is one of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) beneficiaries who graduated in Highschool in 2015. Full of determination, he never sees the loses hope but takes the hardships as an opportunity to give the best that you can.

He graduated in 2013 as the Valedictorian from the Maligaya High School in Novaliches. Excelling in his studies, David passed the University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT) and is currently pursuing civil engineering in UP Los Baños.

Given an opportunity to inspire his fellow Pantawid Graduate, David shared, “Ang makapag-aral sa tulong ng Pantawid Pamilya ay isang magandang pagkakataon at hindi ko ito sasayangin.”

This poem is part of David's valedictory speech to his fellow Pantawid graduates.

paglipad ay ginawa nilang posible. Matanaw lahat ng aking pangarap na noo'y isa lamang panaginip. Binuksan nila ang daan sa aming lahat, sa lahat ng kapus-palad, bahag ang buntot at kapos sa paglipad. Mga maiikli ang pakpak ay kanilang binigyan ng lakas, tinuruang lumipad ng napakataas. Kaya nandito ako ngayon upang lubos na magpasalamat sa lahat ng taong ginawang makakatotohanan ang isang imahinasyon,

realidad ang dating ilusyon. MARAMING MARAMING SALAMAT PO. Nawa'y magustuhan niyo ang handog kong tula.

Muli, lahat tayo ay libreng mangarap. Ngunit katulong natin ang buong bayan sa pagtupad nito upang ang lahat nang dating nakaguhit lamang sa papel ay maging totoo. Kaibigan, malaya kang abutin ang pangarap mo. Maraming salamat po.

BIYAYA

Ni David Louie C. Manansala

Isang kariton ang kinilalang tahanan, bahay kung tawagin,
Mga taong ang buhay ay paliko-liko, daang di mo mawari,
Kumukukot sa lamig ng umaga, ginaw na hindi mo mapawi,
Kumot ay ipinagkait, tsokrateng di man lang natikman ng mga labi.

Telang nagsilbi nilang bubong habang may kandilang nakasindi,
Nagbibigay ng ilaw, init sa isang napakahabang gabi,
Sa matigas na papag, nasisiksikan sampung magkakapatid,
Sama-samang nagdarasal na bukas, ginahawa na'y makakamit.

Sa gilid ng bahay ay may isang mapamukaw na guhit,
Sa lukot na papel, litrato ng pangarap nilang bahay ang nakasabit,
Habang sa ibaba nama'y buong pamilya nila ang nakasingit,
Subalit sa dulo'y isa pa rin itong panaginip, nakakamtam lamang sa pagpikit.

Sapagkat hindi alam kung paano bubuuin, itatayo itong tahanan,
Sinasakal sila ng panahong lumilipas, kalaro'y anino ng kahirapan,
Paano aalis, iiwan ang nakasanayang buhay, ni hindi na malaman,
Hanggang kailan magtitiis, kailan ang putik ay di na sila mapapahiran.

Pagkalam ng sikmura ang gumagambala sa bawat umaga,
Nagtutulak sa kanilang suungin muli ang daan ng krusada
Pupunasan ang luha, isusuot ang tapang, tatanggalin ang hiya,
'Para ito sa pamilya ko', ang kanilang sambit habang nakatingala.

Kinalyo na ng hirap at pagpapagal sa trabaho,
Walang kapaguran, determinasyon ay hindi maglalaho,
Balang araw ay makaalpas sa kamay ng karukhaang sadyang mapaglaro,
Pumasot nagpanday, nagpatibay sa kanilang mga puso.

Ginamit ang pamilya bilang kanilang lakas at inspirasyon,
Sa bawat bagyo ng buhay, naging bangka nila sa bawat daluyong,
Ngunit hindi sapat upang sama-samang makalagpas, makaahon,
Sa bigat ng buhay, sa langib ng sitwasyon, at sa tarik ng alon.

Isang biyayang tunay, mga anghel na bumaba sa langit,
Mga pakpak na nais silang ilipad, sa tagumpay sila'y isabit,
Taong mga puso'y di halang, gobyernong hindi ganid,
Pangkalahatang tagumpay sa buong bansa ang kanilang ibig.

Hinandugan ng edukasyon mga batang kapus-palad,
Sinigurado ang kalugusan, tama, maayos at sapat,
Hindi nagkulang sa paggabay, suportang walang katapat,
Katulong sa paglanggas, paggamot sa buhay na may lamat.

Kulang ang tulang ito upang ipaabot ang aming pasasalamat nang lubos,
Ipinanalangin na ang biyaya'y di mawala, kailanma'y di maubos,
Sapagkat ito ang aming sandata upang karukhaa'y matapos,
Di na muling maibabaon, sa kahirapa'y di na magpapagapos.

Ako si David Louie C. Manansala, isang benepisyaryo,
Isa sa nakalathala dito ang akin nang naging kwento,
Kwento ng pagbangon sa kahirapan, katulong ang biyayang hawak ko,
Kwento ng marami nating kababayan at muli, ng biyayang hawak ko.

4Ps removes barriers to education

Born with a congenital deformity, Edy Rose Tayab of Quezon, Bukidnon was teased and bullied by her classmates because she has no feet and left hand. Going to school was physically and emotionally difficult for her but other than the dispiriting remarks about her disability, Edy Rose was more discouraged to go to school because of the effects of poverty to her family.

“May adlaw ko nga walay balon sauna (Before, there were days that I didn’t have food to take for my school),” said 21-year old Edy Rose about her condition before her family became a Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) beneficiary. It was a challenging time for them that her family could hardly address their needs and send her to school.

The aid Edy Rose’s family received from 4Ps was a great help to alleviate their circumstances, as it enabled her go to school. She graduated high school in 2015 among the 200,000 student-beneficiaries of the first batch of 4Ps high school graduates. She was top 9 of her class and was determined to go to college.

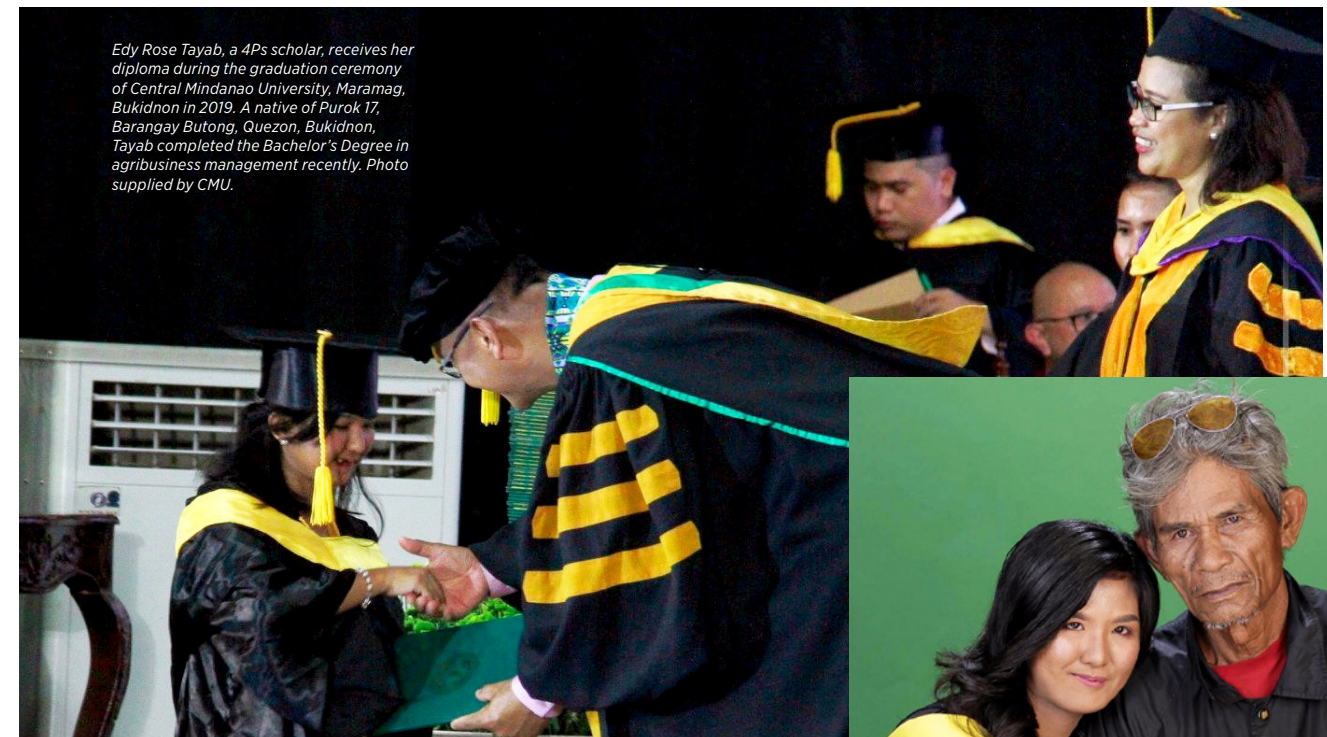
“I wanted to prove myself that I can do what normal people can do,” she said.

Sahanudin Benito Pumbaya of Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur also has a similar story. His family used to be a 4Ps beneficiary. Saha had an accident when he was still a toddler, which affected the growth of his leg bones thus his mobility was limited. He also experienced being ridiculed for his disability but instead of letting these challenges affect him, he made them motivations to push him to improve the other aspects of his life.

The stories of Edy Rose and Saha show that sometimes the disability is not the biggest hindrance in achieving one’s dreams but the lack of opportunities to do so.

4Ps was designed to change circumstances of students like Edy Rose and Saha. It provides cash grants to household-beneficiaries that comply with its education and health conditionalities. It helps remove barriers that prevent children from going to school, like not having baon and transportation allowance or budget for school projects and being sick.

In addition to cash grants given to compliant beneficiaries, 4Ps partners with other government agencies that can provide opportunities for social development, like tertiary education.



Edy Rose Tayab, a 4Ps scholar, receives her diploma during the graduation ceremony of Central Mindanao University, Maramag, Bukidnon in 2019. A native of Purok 17, Barangay Butong, Quezon, Bukidnon, Tayab completed the Bachelor's Degree in agribusiness management recently. Photo supplied by CMU.



Edy Rose Tayab with her father, Eduardo, during her graduation rites. Tayab's mother died while she was in her third year in college. She is a former recipient of the Extended Student Grant-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGPPA) of DSWD and Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and UNIFAST of CHED. Photo supplied by CMU.

Edy Rose enrolled in Central Mindanao University through the help of the Expanded Student Grant-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGPPA), a college education program of the Commission on Higher Education for 4Ps beneficiaries. Saha got into Mindanao State University-Maguindanao Campus, and with the assistance from ESGP-PA he earned his Bachelor of Science in Public Administration degree in 2016.

Launched in 2012, ESGP-PA aimed at helping 4Ps households to have college graduates so they will have better chance at getting out of poverty. It initially covered 4,000 grantees, and later was expanded to cover 36,000 grantees.

With the implementation of Republic Act 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, ESGP-PA has been transferred to CHED's Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act, or UniFAST. ESGP-PA grantees under the Tertiary Education Subsidy receive stipend for room and board costs, books, school supplies, miscellaneous personal

expenses, like rental or purchase of personal computer or laptop, and other education-related expenses.

According to data of 4Ps and CHED, ESGP-PA has able to produce more than 30,000 graduates nationwide since the Academic Year 2015-2016. Currently for AY 2018-2019, there are 13,000 enrollees.

One of the recent ESGP-PA graduates is Edy Rose who, last July 2019, completed a bachelor degree in agribusiness management. She did not let her disability and people’s judgment steal her dream. Instead she persevered because she believes that, “There’s no elevator to success. You need to take up the stairs,” as she says in a social media post.

Saha, meanwhile, was employed at DSWD-Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao as an information desk officer four months after his graduation. He continues living his dreams as he pursues a post-graduate degree.

Tribute to Usec Pablo, former National Project Director of 4Ps



Pioneering a program isn't easy, especially if it will be implemented nationwide. But nothing can stop the then Undersecretary Lualhati Pablo's goal. With the burning passion and unceasing efforts to help her fellow countrymen be lifted up from poverty, she was resolute to push through with the program which we now call the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

This message was written by then Undersecretary Lualhati Pablo intended for a publication featuring the milestone of the 4Ps. However, due to some circumstances, the project did not push through. Thus, this message is being published in the Pantawid Pamilya Annual Report 2019 as tribute to Usec. Pablo's unwavering support to the program.

I was privileged to be a lead in pioneering the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program or 4Ps during the last two years of the administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. At that time, I was an Undersecretary under the leadership of then-Secretary Esperanza I. Cabral, who recommended to the President the pilot of a conditional cash transfer (CCT) model after I and two other government officials attended an international conference on it in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2006.

By November that year, the DSWD, with technical assistance from the World Bank, had begun implementing the National Sector Support for Social Welfare and Development Project or NSS-SDRP. One of its four areas of reform was to provide faster and better social protection programs through the 4Ps, a family/household model and development program designed to promote investment in human capital among poor families with children aged 0 to 14.

The aim of the 4Ps was simple: To achieve the Millenium Development Goal (MDG) of offering universal primary education, reducing child mortality, and improving maternal health by following the conditionalities for availing of the cash grant for qualified household beneficiaries. It was patterned after the CCTs that had recently been implemented in Latin American and African countries and were already meeting with success as poverty-reduction measures.

Encouraged by the enthusiastic response of different stakeholders such as the Department of Education, Department of Health, and the first group of LGUs from which the initial group of children were chosen, the DSWD pilot-tested the 4Ps from June to December 2007. A total of 6000 households participated: 1500 each from Agusan del Sur, Misamis Occidental, Pasay City, and Caloocan City.

In 2008, the program was rolled out nationwide. Both President Arroyo and Secretary Cabral consistently provided strong support to the 4Ps implementing team, which over the next five years, oversaw the allocation of approximately PhP20B for the benefit of 320,000 of the poorest households in the Philippines, selectively targeted by the DSWD using the Proxy Means Test or PMT, the computerized socio-economic survey of LGUs developed specifically for the program. While it was too early to see the impact of the program, anecdotal reports gathered illustrated the beginnings of change in the education and health behaviors of the 4Ps children and families.

I wish to congratulate DSWD in observing the 10th anniversary of the implementation of the 4Ps with the publication of DEKADA. It now joins the many countries the world over that have contributed to the documentation of the CCT models as practiced.

I take note that the publication not only chronicles the program's achievements but also the challenges it has encountered and conquered, such as inadequate internet infrastructure, attempts to politicize the program, and the sheer scope of the program's coverage with its HR implications. It is important that we reflect on all the lessons we learned from the program through the years and use them.

I hope the DSWD continues to implement the 4Ps as an investment in the country's most important resource, its children.


LUWALHATI F. PABLO

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