

DSWD advances efforts for peace-building

Working to help attain inclusive and sustainable peace in the country, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) continues to empower and improve the lives of former rebels (FRs) and their families, decommissioned combatants, Kapatiran members, communities in conflict-affected and vulnerable areas (CVAs), and individuals in marginalized sectors through the constant advancements on various peace-building initiatives.

In support of the government's peace agenda, the DSWD implements Executive Order No. 70, series of 2018 or the Whole-of-Nation approach in attaining inclusive and sustainable peace and in ending the armed conflict. With this, the Department continues the provision of assistance to the target beneficiaries of EO 70 in two tracks, as stipulated in the DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 3, series of 2020.

Under the First Track, wherein the DSWD provides assistance directly to FRs, the Department has served a total of 3,749 FRs and their families through various programs from January to October 2021. These include Sustainable Livelihood Program, Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations, Psychosocial Interventions and other Protective Services, and Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program.

Moreover, there are some 226,511 households in CVAs, who received assistance through programs such as, but not limited to KapitBisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services, PAyapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn, Social Pension, and Supplemental Feeding Program, under the Second Track, which is directed towards communities.

One of the commitments of the Department in the implementation

of E.O. 70 is to ensure that existing government programs and projects are gender and culture sensitive. Numerous virtual orientations on the use of gender and culture sensitivity tools were conducted for the member-agencies of the Provincial Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict. The said activities aim to prepare the members and local government units in developing programs that are gender and culture sensitive to ensure equality and inclusivity of marginalized sectors.

Apart from the provisions under E.O. 70, the Department also implements the livelihood and reintegration program for the Kapatiran members. With the issuance of the DSWD Memorandum Circular 17, series of 2021, the Livelihood Settlement Grants allocated to the Kapatiran members will be further enhanced with Reinforcement Grants, as well as the construction of a Child Development Center and complementary Case Management and Psychosocial Intervention for the beneficiaries.

In addition, the Department supports the implementation of the Normalization Program for the Decommissioned Combatants of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). For 2021, a total of 7,200 MILF decommissioned combatants are set to receive Livelihood Settlement Grants this November.

In furtherance of the government's commitments in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, the Department will also partake in the provision of assistance to the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) through the MNLF Transformation Program.

Meanwhile, to further improve the delivery of social services, the Department will officially roll out the Social Work Case Management Guide for Insurgent Returnees in December. This will serve as an improved standard for case managers in extending support and services to former rebels, decommissioned combatants and other groups who wish to turn their backs on armed struggle and return to mainstream society. In preparation for the rollout, the Department will

be conducting training of trainers this month across all regions.

The Department is optimistic that these efforts will continue to contribute to the attainment of a sustainable, just, and lasting peace for all Filipinos. ###