

DSWD holds policy forum to discuss new studies, concepts toward inclusive, strengthened social protection



The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) holds a policy forum with participants from partner organizations and stakeholders, as well as representatives from the Department nationwide.

In line with its objective of instituting strengthened social protection in the new normal, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) hosted an online policy forum on March 6, 2023 as a venue for sharing of studies and new concepts by experts from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), and the Food and Agriculture Organization-World Food Programme (FAO-WFP).

Among the topics discussed during the policy forum were: Overview of the new Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028; Role of Social Registries in Addressing Poverty;

Digitalization of Social Service Processes; Inflation and its Impact on the Food Security of Filipino Families; and Anticipatory Action Approach and Disaster Responsive Social Protection.

PDP 2023-2028: Economic Transformation

NEDA Director Girlie Grace Casimiro Igtiben discussed the 2023-2028 PDP which she emphasized as the National Government's Plan for economic transformation of the country after the effects of the coronavirus.

In her discussion, Director Igbiten shared that pursuant to the transformation agenda of the PDP, six cross cutting strategies were identified. These strategies are: digitalization; servicification; dynamic innovation ecosystem; enhanced connectivity; greater collaboration between local and national governments; and, partnership with the private sector.

The Director explained that the DSWD has a big role in strengthening social protection in the Philippines, specifically, in the information dissemination of programs, capacitating stakeholders, beneficiary identification, and the efficient delivery of services, especially during emergencies.

Social Registries and Digitalization

At this day and age, digitalization of social service process is important, or the use of modern technology in making program implementation more efficient. Furthermore, having relevant existing beneficiary targeting protocols and a unified targeting system will greatly help in addressing poverty in the country.

This was emphasized by PSA Chief Ma. Wilma Fides Marquez as she discussed the Community Based Management Information System (CBMIS) and its benefits in terms of program planning and implementation.

Inflation and food security

The forum also served as a venue for PIDS to share the latest studies on the soaring inflation and its impact on the food security of the Filipinos as discussed by Dr. Roehlano Briones, Senior Research Fellow.

In his discussion, Dr. Briones explained that inflation and COVID-19 had greatly impacted on the nutritional status of children and the overall food security of families. However, he said that income policies like the targeted cash transfers are important in addressing the issue.

Dr. Briones also shared that among the recommendations cited in the study include the formulation of cost effective policies to improve food affordability, as well as to increase productivity.

More efficient disaster response

Meanwhile, FAO-WFP Social Protection Specialist Ruth Honcalada-Georget presented the concept of Anticipatory Action Approach and Disaster Responsive Social Protection. In her discussion, she outlined the importance of the anticipatory action approach which “systematically links early warnings to actions designed to protect families and their assets ahead of a hazard.”

This approach stresses the need for accurate and concrete actions to be taken preparatory or in anticipation of upcoming disasters or calamities, especially as the Philippines is a disaster prone country.

Policies to enact change

In closing, Policy Development and Planning Bureau (PDPB) Assistant Director Ernestina Solloso expressed the Department’s gratitude to the resource persons from partner-agencies and organizations. She shared that from the expert

discussions, the Department was “able to elicit compelling and vital recommendations that will be critical in the development of the Department’s policies and responses.”

She stressed the importance of policies in program planning, development and implementation. Dir. Solloso added that PDPB, the policy arm of the DSWD, “will ensure that recommendations will be captured in the Department’s policy papers, with the ultimate goal of effecting change and making a difference in the lives of our beneficiaries.” ###