

# **PBBM lauds Food Stamp Program; DSWD chief says inter-agency collab key to FSP success**

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. lauded the newest program of the Department of Social Welfare Development's (DSWD) that will help alleviate involuntary hunger during the pilot launch of the WALANG GUTOM 2027: Food Stamp Program (FSP) held Tuesday (July 18) in Tondo, Manila.

"Walang gutom means no more hunger. That is the dream of this administration. That is what we are hoping to achieve in this administration that by the end of 2028. We say that we have done everything to reduce hunger and poverty in our country and to be able to ensure that we can provide a good and healthy and productive life for our people," President Marcos said in his speech.

The President emphasized it is not enough that that government provide all kinds of food, but it also makes sure that the food is of nutritional value as this "will allow especially the children and nursing mothers to become a center of health for life for their children, for their families, and for their communities...so we have set up this program."

"We have always tried to rise up from the throes of poverty, but the problem of hunger and malnutrition still remains. And that is why, it has become a priority of this government that we will fight poverty. We will put in all of our programs, so that one day we can say that we are able to give our people, the very least, the food that they need to survive, the nutrition that they need to survive," the President said.

In his message, DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian explained that

the Food Stamp Program will ensure that poor Filipinos will no longer sleep on empty stomachs and that the kinds of food the beneficiaries can get are not only delicious but also nutritious.

“Sa Walang Gutom Program, hindi lang natin sisiguraduhin na walang Pilipino ang matutulog ng walang laman ang sikmura, atin din pong sisiguraduhin na masustansya ang kanilang kinakain upang sila’y magkaroon ng sapat na lakas at maging bahagi ng ating labor economy,” Secretary Gatchalian said.

(In the Walang Gutom Program, we will not only make sure that no Filipino sleeps with an empty stomach, we will also make sure that what they eat is nutritious so that they have enough strength to become part of our labor economy.)

Also present during the FSP launch at the Don Bosco Youth Center in Tondo were Vice President Sara Z. Duterte-Carpio, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma, and representatives from the Department of Agriculture (DA) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Department of Science and Technology – Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST – FNRI), Department of Health (DOH), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

“Napakahalaga po ng ating kolaborasyon at pakikipagtulungan sa iba’t ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan. Kasama ang DA, DOLE, TESDA, PSA, DOST – FNRI, DOH, DTI na magbibigay rin ng kani-kanilang programa para sa ating benepisyaryo,” Secretary Gatchalian pointed out.

(Our collaboration and cooperation with different government agencies is very important. The DA, DOLE, TESDA, PSA, DOST – FNRI, DOH, and DTI will be our partners in providing services to our beneficiaries.)

“Tulad ng bilin ng mahal nating Pangulo, kailangan po nating magsama-sama at magtulong-tulong upang mas mabilis na maiahon

sa food poverty ang ating mga benepisyaryo,” the DSWD chief stressed.

(As ordered by our beloved President, we need to be united and work together to immediately lift our beneficiaries away from poverty.)

The FSP aims to decrease involuntary hunger experienced by qualified low-income families by giving them access to monetary-based assistance in the form of an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, which will be loaded with Php3,000 food credits per month.

The load credits will be used by beneficiaries to purchase nutritious food items from DSWD-accredited retail partners.

President Marcos, joined by Vice President Duterte and Secretary Gatchalian, led the ceremonial distribution of the EBT to 10 beneficiaries of the FSP, which marked the start of the pilot implementation of the program.

The President also visited the different Kadiwa centers at the Don Bosco Youth Center compound where he talked with the beneficiaries and watched them use their EBT cards to purchase their chosen food items.

The FSP will be implemented by the DSWD in partnership with the World Food Program (WFP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The FSP launch was also attended by representatives from partner-institutions, including the WFP, ADB, Australian Embassy; Japanese Embassy; New Zealand Embassy; Hungarian Embassy; United States Agency for International Aid (USAID); United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); World Bank (WB); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); United Nations (UN) Philippines; International Labor Organization (ILO); and the European Union Delegation to the Philippines. #