

DSWD FO III assesses families in evacuation centers

(Meycauayan City, Bulacan) The DSWD Municipal Action Team assesses the families who are evacuated staying at Malhacan Elementary School, Malhacan in this city. The team uses the Disaster Assistance and Family Access Card (DAFAC) in assessing the 13 families or 65 persons who are affected by typhoon Falcon which occurred on July 8.

The DAFAC aims to validate the status of affected families and will also serve as reference for the provision of additional and appropriate interventions.

DSWD Field Office III assists Typhoon Falcon victims

(City of San Fernando, Pampanga) The Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office III (DSWD FO III) reported that a total of P1,271,000.00 relief assistance has been extended to the victims of Typhoon Falcon in Central Luzon.

Four thousand one hundred family food packs composed of six (6) kg. of rice, eight (8) tins canned goods (corned beef and sardines) and six (6) sachets 3-in-1 coffee, have been extended to the Province of Bulacan.

The flooding spawned by the continuous rain brought by Falcon has affected three (3) provinces in Central Luzon affecting

7,295 families or 36,253 persons in 47 barangays in seven (7) municipalities of the region.

Bulacan, the hardest hit province, has 7,180 families or 35,671 affected from the municipalities of Meycauayan, Marilao, Obando and the City of San Jose Del Monte; Bataan with 65 families or 332 persons affected from the municipalities of Dinalupihan and Mariveles; and 50 families or 250 persons in Zambales.

Twenty four evacuation centers have been set-up and have served 530 families or 3,443 persons. Nine evacuation centers are still in operation serving 163 families or 763 persons. These are in Meycauayan with four (4) and City of San Jose Del Monte with one (1); Mariveles with one (1) and Dinalupihan with three (3).

There were four (4) reported casualties, two drowned and two hit by collapsed fence. One (1) 18year old male from San Marcelino, Zambales was reported missing and one (1) family from Dona Remedios Trinidad with totally damaged house.

Meanwhile, the Municipal Government of San Narciso in Zambales has distributed sleeping mats to the affected families in Barangay Beddeng.

The DSWD Field Office III Quick Response Teams (QRTs) and the Provincial/Municipal Action Teams continuously work closely with the local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (DRRMCs) in their respective areas. ### (Social Marketing Unit)

DSWD, LGU launch program for Sama-Bajaus

Mr. Julhari Gascoli, vice president of the Sama-Bajau Neighborhood Association for Shelter Assistance (NASA) of Bakod Bayan, Cabanatuan City signs the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the SALINLAHI Project for Sama-Bajaus of Cabanatuan City.

DSWD, Cabanatuan City ink MOA for Sama-Bajaus

Cabanatuan City Mayor Julius Cesar Vergara and Director Thelma Biolena of the DSWD-Social Technology Bureau during the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement for the SALINLAHI Project for the Sama-Bajaus in Cabanatuan City.

The SALINLAHI or the Sama-Bajau Localized Interventions and Learning Approach for Holistic Improvement is a community-based project that shall pilot-test Culture-based Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) as a social welfare and development model intervention to be implemented in the Sama-Bajau Activity Centers in Region III and NCR.

In Region III, the project will be pilot-tested in Barangay Bakod Bayan, Cabanatuan City and will benefit 121 families and 110 children aged 0-6. The project seeks to strengthen maternal and child care education of Sama-Bajaus parents; promote culture-based learning sessions for Sama-Bajau

children at the activity center; and increase access of Sama-Bajau families to local services.

The 121 Sama-Bajau families are beneficiaries of the DSWD Core Shelter Assistance Program (CSAP) worth P8,470 million. The City Government of Cabanatuan provided the lot in Barangay Bakod Bayan.

Aside from the CSAP, the DSWD also funded the construction of the activity center worth P2.5 million; Supplementary Feeding Program for Bajau children worth P551,000.00; and Cash for Work worth P524,160.00. ### (Social Marketing Unit)

Day Care Workers Week celebration in Central Luzon

(City of San Fernando, Pampanga) More Than 2,000 day care workers in the seven provinces and 14 cities of Central Luzon converged at the Bren Z. Guiao Convention Center in this city in celebration of the 33rd Regional assembly of Day Care Workers with the theme, " Day Care Workers: Sa Matapat, Mahusay, at Magiliw na Paglilingkod, Kakayahan at Kagalingan ng mga Bata ay Sigurado ".

The annual assembly, which was spearheaded by the Regional Federation of Day Care Workers and the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office III (DSWD FO III), seeks to familiarize and promote camaraderie among the day care workers in the region.

The event was also aimed to strengthen the partnership with the families, local government units (LGUs) and community and also to familiarize them with Republic Act 7610 Also Known as the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act.

DSWD FO III Director Gemma B. Gabuya lauded the day care workers for their contribution in the physical, social, and intellectual development of the pre-school children. She added that the Day Care

Service is a part of the government social protection mandate for pre-school children.

Gabuya also assured the day care workers of the Department's continuous advocacy for the passage of the Magna Carta of Day Care Workers.

Meanwhile, Maribeth Ortiz, MSWDO of Guagua Pampanga shared the Municipality of Guagua's Best Practice in the Implementation Of Day Care Service.

The highlights of the event were the dance competition among the provincial/city day care federation chapters where Zambales won the first place while San Jose del Monte City won the first place in the Draw and Tell contest.

The event, which was hosted by the Province of Pampanga, was part of the observance of the Day Care Workers Week which is being observed on the first week of June of every year. The celebration, which is mandated by Presidential Proclamation No. 404 series of 2003, recognizes the vital role of the day care workers in the promotion of the rights of children. ### (Social Marketing Unit)

4,000 high school beneficiaries in Central Luzon join the Regional Pantawid Pamilya Graduation

(City of San Fernando, Pampanga) The Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office III (DSWD FO III) conducted a Regional Graduation of Pantawid Pamilya High School students on April 29, 2015 at Bren Z. Gualio Convention Center, in this city with the theme "Pagtatapos Nyo, Tagumpay ng Pilipino."

Dubbed as “Pagdiriwang para sa Pantawid Pamilya Graduates ng 2015”, the activity aims to recognize the beneficiaries for working hard to fulfill their dreams in finishing high school.

About 4,500 graduating students, parents, partner-agencies such as Department of Education, Department of Labor and Employment and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Philippine Information Agency and media-partners participated in the said event.

Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program in Central Luzon has already produced 25, 272 high school graduates this year among the more than 300,000 graduates nationwide who are considered the first batch since the program extended the educational assistance to high school.

Of the 25,272 graduates, 710 are from Aurora; 1,487 are from Bataan; 5,624 are from Bulacan; 4,777 are from Pampanga; 3,734 are from Tarlac; 7,355 are from Nueva Ecija and 1,585 from Zambales.

In her welcome remarks, Regional Director Gemma B. Gabuya said, “this celebration serves as a venue for the graduating students to be linked to opportunities such as scholarship, internship, part time job that will help them realize their dream of finishing their studies; an orientation on academic and career opportunities through DOLE, TESDA, and Commission on Higher Education (CHED) will share their respective programs and services.”

Meanwhile, Dr. Mariano C. De Jesus, President of Bulacan State University said during his Keynote Speech, “The greatest gift you can have is education. You gain an access to quality program through DSWD’s Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program. You are lucky because you are chosen.” Dr. De Jesus encouraged the beneficiaries to always dream, because everything starts with a dream.

In her valedictory address, Alexandra Garce of Laur, Nueva Ecija said, “Malaking bahagi ang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program sa aking pag-aaral sa High School. Ngayon may katiyakan na ang aking mga pangarap. Mag-aaral akong mabuti at sisikaping maging CPA.” She ended her speech by thanking President Aquino and DSWD for the opportunity of being part of the program.

DSWD FO III sent four (4) top academic achievers that represented the region in the National graduation held at Araneta Coliseum on April 23, 2015, wherein President Benigno Aquino III was the keynote speaker. In his speech he said, “*At sa araw na ito, pinipitas natin*

ang paunang bunga ng ating pagbabayanihan sa pamamagitan ng Pantawid Pamilya. Ipinagdiriwang natin ang pagtatapos ng 333,673 kabataang bumubuo sa kauna-unahang batch ng high school beneficiaries. Bahagi po sila ng halos 754,400 kabataan sa buong bansa na kasalukuyang nasasaklawan ng tulong ng programa para sa Secondary Education."

PantawidPamilya is a human development program that invests in the health and education of poor households primarily those with children aged 0-18. It provides cash grants to partner-beneficiaries who comply with the conditions of sending their children to school, bringing them to health centers for checkups, and attending the monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS). ### (A.M. Delicano)

Social Pension benefits more seniors in Central Luzon

(City of San Fernando, Pampanga) At least 44,134 older persons are benefiting from the Social Pension Program for older persons this year.

Regional Director Gemma B. Gabuya of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office III (DSWD FO III) said that there is an increase of 13,027 beneficiaries for this year due to the lowering of the age requirement from 77 to 65 years old and above.

From the 31,107 beneficiaries in 2014 with P500 monthly stipend or P6,000.00 each for one year or the total amount of P128,780,500, the allocation has increased to P264,804 million for the implementation of the program this year, Gabuya said.

The senior citizens were identified based on the result of the data generated by the Listahanan or National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the DSWD.

The provision of the P500 monthly social pension to indigent senior citizens is provided under Republic Act No. 9994, also known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010.”

The DSWD has issued operational guidelines that senior citizens who are 65 years old and above who meet the eligibility criteria will benefit from this program. All qualified senior citizens shall receive their P500 monthly social pension on a quarterly basis.

Under RA 9994, indigent senior citizens shall be entitled to a monthly social pension of P500 to augment their daily subsistence and other medical needs. Indigent senior citizens are those who are frail, sick, disabled, not receiving monthly pension from Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Social Security System (SSS), Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), Armed Forces of the Philippines Savings and Loan Association, Inc. (AFPSLAI) and other private insurance companies. Senior citizens who do not have permanent source of income or regular support from their families or relatives are also qualified to avail of the program. ### (Social Marketing Unit)

Reyes’ formula for success

“Magsikap, magtipid lalo na pag nag-uumpisa pa lang sa pangkabuhayang proyekto at ang mga gastusin ay di dapat sosobra sa kinikita.”

The Reyes couple believes that through perseverance and simple

living, their family will overcome poverty. This is the story of their transformation from sheer poverty to improved quality of life.

Looking Back

The Reyes family belongs to the Set 3 beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program of Floridablanca, Pampanga. The family was however one of those tagged not enrolled resulting to non-subsidy for one (1) year. Upon completion of the requirements, they received retroactive payments of P15,000.00. Rizalita, 43, recalled that she cried with joy when she received the amount, "Nuon lang po ako nakahawak ng ganuong kalaking pera kaya nagpapasalamat ako sa pamahalaan sa tulong na ibinigay sa pamilya ko''.

With the P15,000.00 cash grants on hand, the family prioritized the most important things which include the food and school supplies of their three children enrolled in the program; down payment of one motorcycle worth P3,400.00; and P6,000.00 as payment for the two Aetas whom they commissioned to plant ampalaya and string beans.

The family used the remaining P2,600.00 as capital in trading vegetables and charcoal from the upland areas which they brought to Guagua and Floridablanca public markets. After a month, they started harvesting the vegetables planted by the two Aetas which resulted to more sales and profit.

Before their inclusion in the Pantawid Pamilya in 2010, Joseph Reyes, 45, worked as a farm laborer earning P200.00 a day during planting season and 4-5 sacks of rice during harvesting season. Rizalita used to do laundry jobs two or three times a week. Between planting and harvesting seasons, Joseph was jobless.

To cope with their basic needs, the family had to approach sari-sari store owners in the barangay for their daily food subsistence through credit basis. She said that they could

hardly meet the educational expenses of their children especially during lean months of farming. "Life was so hard because of the rebuff we received from our relatives and neighbors whenever we tried to borrow money from them," Rizalita lamented.

Their house is a one-room affair made of light materials, cogon and sawali. During rainy season, they sometimes experienced uncomfortable nights because the strong rain would usually rouse them from sleep soaked with rain. They could not afford electricity so a lampara (improvised lamp) was all they had that time.

"We were a 'nobody' in the community because of our economic status. That's why we felt very inferior and had to remain on the sidelines for so long," Rizalita said. She said that the financial difficulty they had for a long time was their motivation for their hard work and for not spending any amount for unnecessary expenses.

Things took a turn for the better

"With the income derived from our livelihood projects: planting rice to the agricultural lot pawned to us and the backyard piggery, we can now see positive changes in our living condition," Rizalita said. According to her, their monthly income now ranges from P30,000-40,000.00 and that they already finished paying the motorcycle with side car which they use in their business. Their second motorcycle, which is being used as school service for their children, is now on the second year of payment. "Our children are now comfortable in going to school because they don't have to walk very far," Rizalita said.

The construction of our three-bedroom house is now underway, Rizalita said with a happy note on her voice. Although their present dwelling is made of cogon and sawali, it is a far cry from the one they used to have, Rizalita added. They used a lampara before but now they already have

some appliances such as TV set and DVD player, electric fans, beds with mattresses, rice cooker and some electronic gadgets.

Rizalita said that she has gained confidence in dealing with people and can now express her ideas without fear of being rebuffed. She has to attribute this to the Family Development Sessions (FDS) and the trainings and seminars that she attended as a parent leader of the Pantawid Pamilya. As a result, she was elected as classroom secretary for her two sons enrolled in Grades IV and V. She is also one of the Barangay Health Workers in their community and was elected president of the Self-Employment Assistance Kaunlaran (SKA) because of her remarkable ideas during the Business Management Training (BMT) held in their town.

Meanwhile, Joseph personally attends to the agricultural lot pawned to them where they yield 30 sacks of palay every four months.

There is also a notable improvement in the health of their children because of the sufficient and nutritious food intake they have. Their academic standing in school has also improved, Rizalita proudly said.

Gains of the Sustainable Livelihood Program

In 2013, the family had also benefitted from the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the DSWD which they invested (P10,000.00) in expanding their livelihood endeavor, cogon and buho trading. Rizalita said that they are getting an additional profit of P1,000.00 per week.

We believe in the saying, 'save for the rainy days' that's why we opened a savings account after my attendance to the BMT, Rizalita said. She was convinced on the importance of savings and had learned how to prioritize the needs of her family especially the education of her children.

Today the family earns more than enough for their basic needs.

Rizalita has this lesson to impart to other beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilya and Sustainable Livelihood Program: "Magsikap, magtipid lalo na pag nag-uumpisa pa lang sa pangkabuhayang proyekto at ang mga gastusin ay di dapat sosobra sa kinikita." ### (SMU/SLP)