

# **DSWD recognizes transformative role of social workers in World Social Work Day celebration**

In line with the World Social Work Day celebration, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in partnership with the ASEAN Social Work Consortium-Philippines, held a forum to promote the development of the social work profession on Wednesday (March 20) at the DSWD Central Office Auditorium in Quezon City.

The World Social Work Day is celebrated annually on the 3rd Tuesday of March with this year's event slated on March 19. With the theme, "Buen Vivir: Shared Future for Transformative Change," the World Social Work Day honors the hard work and dedication of social workers to bring transformative change to communities through the principle of "Buen Vivir," which means "living well" or "life in harmony."

In her opening remarks, Undersecretary for Standards and Capacity Building Group (SCBG) Denise Bernos-Bragas enjoined the participants to continue to "cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate" in addressing the contemporary challenges and bring into fruition the aspirations of social work in the global setting.

Undersecretary for National Household Targeting System and Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) Vilma Cabrera, who is a veteran social worker, highlighted the importance of social work in promoting social justice, human rights, and sustainable development.

"Social work is a practice-based profession, whose core mandate or core intention is to effect social change, social

development, social transformation, and changes favorable to the society, the individuals, the families, and the nation," Undersecretary Cabrera explained.

Undersecretary Cabrera pointed out that promoting the celebration contributes to the initiatives of the roadmap in the implementation of the Hanoi Declaration on Social Work that aims to strengthen the social work and social service workforce towards "the effective, responsive and sustainable delivery of inclusive and quality social service" in the ASEAN region.

"By commemorating the World Social Work Day, stakeholders can leverage the momentum generated by this global event to highlight the role of social work in addressing regional challenges and provide a platform to showcase successful social work interventions and initiatives that have made a positive impact," Undersecretary Cabrera said.

Several speakers discussed specific topics related to the strengthening of the social work profession. The resource persons included DSWD Asst. Secretary for SCBG Janet Armas; Ateneo de Davao University Social Work Department Chairperson Dr. Epifania Melba Manapol; Association of Local Social Welfare and Development Officer Jocelyn Arzaga; and, Ateneo de Davao University social work student Jhunhalyne Villarta.

Also gracing the event were ASEAN Social Work Consortium-Philippines Chairperson Gladys Bunao; Department of Health League of Medical Social Workers President Evelyn Muniz; National Association of Social Work Education, Inc. President Khalachuchi Flores-Caballes; Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc. official representative Rosauro Luntayao; and, Philippine Association of Court Social Workers, Inc. official representative Precious Loida Ladaga. #

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# **Tara Basa! Tutoring Program pormal nang inilunsad sa probinsya ng Bulacan**

DSWD Field Office 3 – Central Luzon , pormal na inilunsad ang Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program (TBTP) na ginanap sa Bulacan State University, Malolos, Bulacan.

Personal na dinaluhan ni Usec. Eduardo Punay kasama si DSWD Field Office 3 – Central Luzon Director Venus F. Rebuldela ang Grand Launching ng TBTP sa probinsya. Kasabay din nito ang paglagda ng Memorandum of Agreement sa pagitan ng DSWD, Lalawigan ng Bulacan, Lungsod ng Malolos at San Jose del Monte, Bulacan State University, Bulacan Polytechnic College, at City College of San Jose del Monte, na sinaksihan ng mga kinatawan mula sa Department of Education (DepEd) Region 3.

Sa mensahe ni Usec. Punay, saad niya na “Hindi po tayo papayag na ang mga kabataan dito sa bayan ng makakata ay hirap magbasa.”

Sa pangwakas na mensahe ni Dir. Rebuldela, kanyang binigyang diin na “Tunay na magiging maganda ang outcome ng programang ito kung lahat tayo ay magbubuklod-buklod at sama-sama tungo sa isang adhikain para sa Bagong Pilipinas.”

Target ng TBTP na matulungan ang 1,583 mag-aaral sa kolehiyo. 1,319 bilang mga tutor at 264 bilang mga Youth Development Workers (YDW) ang makakatanggap ng reformatted education assistant na Cash-for-Work program.

Ayon sa datos mula sa DepEd, tinatayang 13,188 ang mga batang nahihirapan o hindi kayang magbasa ang tututukan sa loob ng 20

tutoring sessions. Kaakibat nito ang pagkakaroon ng parenting session ang mga YDW sa mga Nanay-Tatay Teacher upang magtuloy-tuloy ang progreso sa pagbabasa ng mga mag-aaral. ###

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## **60 centenarians in Central Luzon received their cash gift worth ₱100k each**

The Republic Act No. 10868 also known as the Centenarian Act of 2016 is an act to honor and recognize Filipino senior citizens who have reached 100 years of age or above, living in the Philippines or abroad.

These senior citizens, also called centenarians, receive a cash gift worth Php 100,000.00 and a certificate of recognition from the national government through the Department of Social Welfare and Development as well as a letter of felicitation signed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

60 centenarians across Central Luzon were awarded for the first quarter of the year while another 18 centenarians are scheduled to be awarded this April.

Centenarians must present their Office of the Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) Identification (ID) Card, Philippine Passport for those living abroad, or any valid government-issued ID indicating their date of birth.

The DSWD Field Office 3 – Central Luzon has a set target of 190 centenarians to be awarded for this year.###

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# **DSWD brings Tara Basa! Tutoring Program to Cebu, other provinces**

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is set to kick off on Friday (March 8) the expanded implementation of its Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program through a ceremonial program launch to be held in Cebu City, an agency official said on Wednesday (March 6).

DSWD Asst. Secretary for Strategic Communications Romel Lopez said the Department will implement the tutoring program, which is the agency's recalibrated educational assistance, in other regions after its successful pilot run in the National Capital Region (NCR) last year.

"Following the good feedback and success of our pilot run in Metro Manila, we are about to bring Tara, Basa! program to more communities around the country," Asst. Sec. Lopez, who is also DSWD spokesperson, said.

The DSWD official pointed out that the expansion will cover areas including San Jose Del Monte City; Malolos City; Bulacan Province; Cebu City; Marawi City; Taraka in Lanao Del Sur; Western Samar; General Santos City; and Quezon province. The program will also be implemented in more local government units (LGUs) in the NCR.

As part of the kick-off ceremony in Cebu City, the agency spokesperson said a memorandum of agreement (MOA) will be jointly signed by DSWD Field Office-7 (Central Visayas) Regional Director Shalaine Marie Lucero; Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama; and Dr. Daniel Ariaso Sr, State Universities

and Colleges (SUC) President, Cebu Normal University.

The signing will be witnessed by DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian and Undersecretary for Innovations Eduardo Punay.

The MOA will formalize the DSWD-LGU-SUC partnership in implementing the Tara! BASA program in Cebu City.

“The MOA stipulates the duties and responsibilities of the stakeholders in ensuring the proper implementation of Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program in Cebu City,” the DSWD spokesperson said.

With Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program, non and struggling readers in elementary will benefit through the provision of reading sessions, according to Asst. Sec. Lopez.

“Their parents and guardians will also be given cash-for-work (CFW) in exchange for their attendance to Nanay Tatay learning sessions and in assisting their children in preparing their needs for learning and reading and in their after-reading assignments,” the DSWD spokesperson explained.

Under the program, 2nd to 4th year college students will be deployed as Tutors who will teach children beneficiaries to read.

Additionally, Youth Development Workers (YDWs) will facilitate Nanay-Tatay Sessions to provide parents or guardians with parenting guidance.

Asst. Sec. Lopez reiterated that the Tara, Basa! Tutoring Program is the reformatted educational assistance of the DSWD that creates an ecosystem of learning wherein college students will be capacitated and deployed as tutors to teach poor and non or struggling readers in elementary and as YDWs to conduct Nanay-Tatay sessions. #

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# **DSWD honors women in celebration of National Women's Month this March**

In line with the National Women's Month Celebration (NWMC) this March, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has reaffirmed its commitment to support and promote the rights of women towards a more inclusive society.

The 2024 NWMC carries the sub-theme, "Lipunang Patas sa Bagong Pilipinas; Kakayahan ng Kababaihan, Patutunayan!" which highlights the need to showcase and harness the full potentials of women and girls in actively engaging in and reaping the benefits of national growth and development.

"Women have huge influence in our country, not only as homemakers, but as leaders in their chosen fields, and also as catalysts to nation building," DSWD Asst. Secretary for Strategic Communications Romel Lopez said.

Asst. Sec. Lopez, who is also DSWD spokesperson, said the Department, through its programs and services, will continue to strive to build more spaces for women to participate and become empowered citizens.

"The DSWD strongly believes in the power of women as change-makers. The government, as a duty-bearer, has the responsibility to continue to address the gaps that hinder women and girls to fully attain the benefits of gender equality and sustainable development. We encourage everyone to participate in the advocacy of strengthening the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women or Republic Act 9710," Asst. Sec. Lopez pointed out.

The DSWD will support and participate in the NWMC activities led by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), through the conduct of advocacy activities such as the #PurpleFridays wherein DSWD employees are enjoined to wear their best purple attire every Friday of March, and the #PurpleYourIcon wherein offices are adorned with purple elements to symbolize solidarity with women's empowerment and gender equality, and promote conversations surrounding the NWMC.

The Department will conduct the “#Herspace is a Safeplace” online and face-to-face forum on March 19 and 20 to advocate and promote a fair, safe, inclusive and gender-sensitive working environment in the Central Office and all its Field Offices.

The DSWD is also encouraging the public to take part in all NWMC online activities through the hashtag #WeCanBeEquALL. #

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## **DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program aims for long-term impact for beneficiaries**

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) now aims to provide long-term impact to program beneficiaries with its five-year sustainability plan, an agency official said on Thursday (February 22) at the DSWD Media Forum.

DSWD Assistant Secretary for Specialized Programs under the Operations Group and concurrent SLP officer-in-charge Florentino Loyola Jr emphasized that the agency has improved and enhanced the implementation of the SLP through its 'Sibol'



five-year livelihood sustainability plan.

“Ito [five-year sustainability plan] ang pinaka-recent na enhancement dito sa [SLP] na directive po ng ating Secretary Rex Gatchalian na talagang, ang gusto kasi natin ay long term ang tulong sa ating mga kababayan. Talagang ma-emphasize natin ang sustainability sa ating Sustainable Livelihood Program,” Asst. Sec. Loyola told reporters at the media forum.

(This is the most recent enhancement here in the SLP, a directive from our Secretary Rex Gatchalian. What we really want is long-term assistance for our fellow citizens. We truly want to emphasize sustainability in our Sustainable Livelihood Program.)

Under the sustainability plan, the program participants will need a longer incubation period, starting from year 2 to year 5 through intensified capability-building activities and additional livelihood incentives for livelihood sustainability and resiliency.

Asst. Sec. Loyola said the sustainability plan also paves the way to increase the grants and provide incentives to SLP Associations (SLPAs) that take the program’s Micro-enterprise Development Track (MDT), as they grow their businesses or livelihood.

“Sa programang ito, five years natin silang imo-imonitor. At ang kagandahan din po ng programang ito, na-incentivize na po ito, unlike noong mayroon tayong two year incubation lamang,” the DSWD official noted.

(In this program, we will monitor them for five years. And the beauty of this program is that it has been incentivized, unlike before when we only had a two-year incubation period.)

Asst. Sec. Loyola said SLP Associations will receive Php100,000 in product diversification and development grants for the first two years, and another Php100,000 in sustainable

employment grants for their third year in the program.

“Talagang e-enganyuhin natin ang ating mga kababayan na talagang pag-ibayuhin ang kanilang mga negosyo na mapaunlad,” Asst. Sec. Loyola pointed out.

(We will really encourage our participants to truly enhance and develop their businesses.)

Successful SLPAs that complete the five-year plan will also be granted a maximum of Php250,000 in livelihood grants as part of their actual graduation from the program, according to the SLP OIC.

Asst. Sec. Loyola added: “Kasama na rin diyan sa five-year sustainability plan natin na from informal business, matutulungan natin sila na ma-formalize.”

(Part of our five-year sustainability plan is to assist them in formalizing their businesses, starting from informal ones.)

The SLP, as mentioned by Asst. Sec. Loyola, will also help the associations in the facilitation of the necessary permits and documents from the concerned agencies for the long-term operations of their businesses.

The SLP OIC also recommended aspiring business owners to form an association to avail of bigger grants and to undergo the MD Track of the SLP.

“Maaaring makatanggap ang ating qualified beneficiaries ng Php15,000 na seed capital o puhunan para sa indibidwal, kung kayo po ay nag-form ng association, ang grant po na binibigay natin ay Php20,000 kada benepisyaryo,” Asst. Sec. Loyola explained.

(Our qualified beneficiaries may receive Php15,000 as seed capital funds for individuals. If you form an association, the grant we provide is Php20,000 per beneficiary.)

To be eligible for the SLP, an association must have a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 30 members who are at least 16 years old with legal consent from guardians or parents, and should belong to the poor, marginalized, vulnerable and/or disadvantaged households, identified by the National Household targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) or Listahanan.

Sibol, as the new brand of the DSWD's SLP, represents the step-by-step growth in the journey of its participants toward improved well-being with equitable access to livelihood assets and resources. #

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## **DSWD seals partnership with gov't agencies, LGUs to address El Niño**

In line with efforts to address the effects of the El Niño phenomenon, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to officially launch the Project LAWA at BINHI or Local Adaptation to Water Access and Breaking Insufficiency through Nutritious Harvest for the Impoverished through cash-for-training and -work on Thursday (February 22) in Doña Remedios Trinidad town in Bulacan province.

The project aims to strengthen the adaptive capabilities of the impoverished and vulnerable families in addressing the challenges during periods of severe drought conditions.

It specifically focuses on mitigating the impact of food

insecurity and water scarcity brought about by the El Niño.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will pave the way towards a stronger partnership of the DSWD, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Agriculture (DA), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the United Nations World Food Programme (UN-WFP) in implementing and monitoring Project LAWA at BINHI in selected localities affected by El Niño around the country.

DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian, in his message delivered by Undersecretary for Disaster Response Management Group (DRMG) Diana Rose Cajipe, said the implementation of Project LAWA at BINHI is in line with the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 of the Marcos Administration.

The DSWD chief said the new sealed partnership will ensure that vulnerable sectors will be prioritized during period of water scarcity.

“Ang Memorandum of Understanding na ating pinirmahan ay sumisimbolo sa ating pagkakaisa sa pamamahagi ng social protection services sa tunay na mga nangangailangan nating mga kababayan, lalong lalo na sa mga katutubo, magsasaka, mangingisda, at iba pang sektor na posibleng maapektuhan ng panahon ng tagtuyot,” the DSWD Secretary said in his message.

(The Memorandum of Understanding that we have signed symbolizes our unity in the distribution of social protection services to our fellow citizens in need, especially to indigenous peoples, farmers, fishermen, and other sectors who may be affected by drought conditions.)

Projects Lawa and Binhi will be implemented in around 300 cities and municipalities in 58 provinces around the country.

A total of 10 Project LAWA at BINHI projects are expected to be conducted in each of the target localities with 50 partner-beneficiaries who will participate in cash-for-training (CFT)

and cash-for-work (CFW), under the DSWD's Risk Resiliency Program (RRP). #

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## **DSWD's livelihood program benefits over 3.3 million beneficiaries since 2011**

More than 3.3 million beneficiaries have been assisted by the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) since it was first implemented in 2011 through the provision of capital seed fund for microenterprises and employment assistance, an agency official said on Thursday (February 22).

"Ang SLP ay isang capability building program na naglalalayong iangat ang socio-economic conditions ng ating mga kababayan lalo na 'yong mga vulnerable at marginalized sector. Maliban po sa regular implementation ng ating SLP, ito din po ay tumugon sa iba't-ibang pangyayari sa ating bansa tulad ng Marawi Siege, Boracay closure, at 'yong imposition ng rice price caps in 2023," DSWD Asst. Secretary for Specialized Programs under the Operations Group and concurrent SLP officer-in-charge Florentino Loyola Jr. said.

(The SLP is a capability building program that aims to improve the socio-economic conditions of our countrymen, especially those in the vulnerable and marginalized sector. Aside from the regular program, the SLP also responded to different incidents in the country such as the Marawi Siege, Boracay closure, and the imposition of rice price caps in 2023.)

Asst. Sec. Loyola said the SLP is on the right track in

achieving its objective of helping families and individuals who are affected by economic shocks as well as in providing opportunities to those who want to be employed and to establish their own entrepreneurial projects.

“So, sa kabuuan po ay higit 3.3 milyong benepisyaryo ang natulungan ng SLP simula noong una itong ipinatupad noong 2011,” Asst. Sec. Loyola said during the Thursday Media Forum at the New Press Center of the Central Office in Quezon City.

(Overall, the SLP has assisted more than 3.3 million beneficiaries since it was first implemented in 2011.)

Asst. Sec. Loyola told reporters that the SLP is being implemented through a two-track program. The first track, the Microenterprise Development Track (MDT), supports micro-enterprises in becoming organizationally and economically viable. The second track, the Employment Facilitation Track (EFT), assists participants to access appropriate employment opportunities.

### **How to become a beneficiary**

Beneficiaries of the first track should be at least 16 years old while those for the second track should be at least 18 years old.

Those qualified under the MDT are given Php15,000 each as capital assistance but for those who are members of an association, they are given Php20,000 each.

Under the EFT, first time job seekers are given Php5,000 which they can use to prepare their requirements, and cover transportation and other expenses.

Interested applicants may approach the city or municipal coordinators in their localities on how to go about the application process for SLP.

“Para ikaw ay mapabilang sa SLP, kinakailangan na ikaw ay kabilang sa Listahanan database o kaya ay isa kang 4Ps beneficiary. Subalit kung wala kayo sa dalawang nabanggit subalit kayo ay mahirap, ang SLP ang magsasagawa ng “means test” o ang mag-check sa inyong katayuan kung kayo ay qualified,” Asst. Sec. Loyola explained.

(For you to be included in the SLP, you need to be part of the Listahanan database or you are a 4Ps beneficiary. However, if you do not belong to any of the two but you are poor, the SLP will conduct the ‘means test’ to check if you are qualified.)

The DSWD Thursday Media Forum is hosted by Asst. Secretary for Strategic Communications Romel Lopez and Traditional Media Service (TMS) Director Aldrine Fermin and livestreamed over the DSWD Facebook account. #