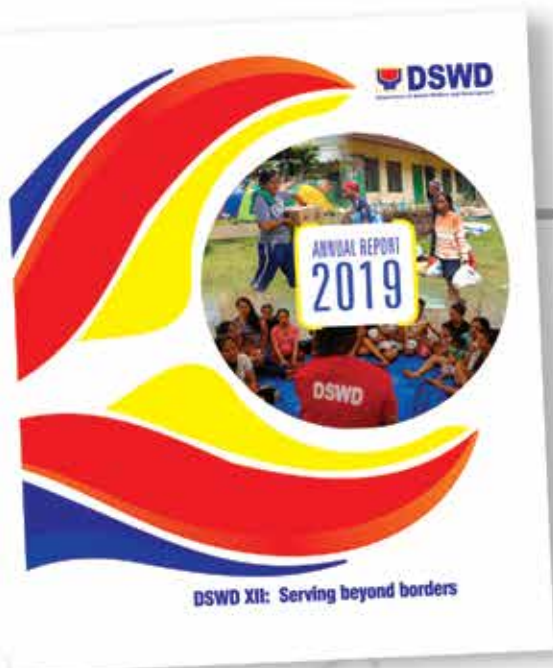




DSWD ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**DSWD XII: Serving beyond borders**



## About the Cover

DSWD Field Office XII continues to fulfill its mandates despite the various challenges encountered day after day. Its workforce remains committed to reach out and serve with quality programs, projects and activities regardless cultural and organizational boundaries.



## Vision

The Department of Social Welfare and Development envisions all Filipinos free from hunger and poverty, have equal access to opportunities, enabled by a fair, just and peaceful society.

## Mission

To lead in the formulation, implementation, and coordination of social welfare and development policies and programs for and with the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged.

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Republic of the Philippines  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Quezon City



**I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office (FO) XII under the leadership of Director Cezario Joel C. Espejo.**

The year 2019 saw numerous challenges encountered and surmounted by the hardworking FO XII staff who epitomizes the Maagap at Mapagkalingang Serbisyo.

Undoubtedly, the FOs of the DSWD play a crucial role in the attainment of our goals. Their significant contributions are the yardstick by which we measure our success in the delivery of efficient, effective, and compassionate service to the poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged sectors.

FO XII faced seemingly insurmountable odds, but the strength and resiliency of the officials and staff enabled it to deliver excellent service. Hence, the 2019 Annual Accomplishment of DSWD FO XII reflects the results of the hard work of the regional staff, highlighted by the implementation of the DSWD's major programs such as Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino with 223,351 households enrolled in the regular Conditional Cash Transfer program including Marawi City; Kapit Bisig Laban Sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services which covered three of four provinces in the region; Sustainable Livelihood Program which assisted 13,296 households; and Social Pension Program which benefitted 74% of indigent senior citizens coming from the overall clean list.

Moreover, the region's performance in other programs was equally outstanding. These included disaster response management having provided P53.78 million resource augmentation to different provinces in Region XII and Maguindanao; and Supplemental Feeding Program, with the regional office posting a record high accomplishment serving 101,395 children or 102% accomplishment as against your 99,121 target children.

Notably, the regional office also played a pivotal role in the government's peace efforts by helping decommissioned combatants of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which will enable them to live normal lives.

The regional staff walked the extra mile to render invaluable service 24/7 especially in times of disasters. I commend your heroic efforts to render prompt and compassionate service to the sectors that we vowed to serve.

Ipagpatuloy natin ang mapagkalingang serbisyo!

  
ROLANDO JOSELITO DELIZO BAUTISTA  
Secretary



Republic of the Philippines  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT  
FIELD OFFICE XII  
Purok Bumanaag, Brgy. Zone III, City of Koronadal, South Cotabato

Message



**It is with great pride to share with you the 2019 Annual Report of DSWD Field Office XII.**

The year 2019 was full of surprises, challenges and successes as we continue our mandate in providing government's programs, projects and services to be an instrument in attaining a country that is free from hunger and poverty, have equal access to opportunities, enabled by a fair, just and peaceful society.

For the past year, DSWD Field Office XII has earnestly endeavored to fulfill its mandate to deliver basic quality services that our people deserved. We are grateful for a chance to reflect on the agency's accomplishments, with an eye toward charting the path forward. We welcomed new opportunities as we embraced the new normal brought about by natural and man-made disasters in the last quarter of the year. Despite the neck-level responsibilities, we executed our plan with vigor and we responded to challenges achieving tangible results for our intended beneficiaries.

Our Annual Report aims to share with our stakeholders the various inspiring stories from different parts of Region XII. These stories put concrete faces in our figures as part of our responsibility that government resources are utilized with informed decisions, transparency and accountability.

Thank you to all our stakeholders. Our successes are your successes, too. This is because of the combined strength of the wonderful people who comprise our team and partners in bringing services closer to our people.

CEZARIO JOEL C. ESPEJO  
Regional Director



# 2019 In Review

The Ambisyon Natin 2040 of President Rodrigo Duterte paved the way for the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office XII (DSWD FO XII) to ensure concrete and timely delivery of social welfare services for the poor, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged sectors. With this, the DSWD FO XII has taken significant strides in firming up its organizational and societal contributions towards national development anchored on the DSWD's vision and mission statements and core values as specified in the five (5) organizational outcomes.

The DSWD envisions being the world's standard for the delivery of coordinated social services and social protection for poverty reduction by 2030. To continue its effort to fight against poverty, DSWD focuses on the pillars of poverty reduction which are risk protection, asset and capability building, and voice and empowerment.



- The year 2019 was a year of relentless activities for the DSWD FO XII. The former Regional Director Bai Zorahayda T. Taha made her retirement in August 2019 and was replaced by the vibrant and dynamic Regional Director Cezario Joel C. Espejo. Despite the change in leadership, DSWD FO XII continued to bring the social protection services closer to the people of SOCCSKSARGEN.

Consistent with the provisions of Section 2 of EO 867 series of 2010, the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction or Listahanan identified a total target of 815,343 households for Region XII and 556,555 for Lanao Del Sur and

Maguindanao in BARMM with an ongoing conduct of household assessments to update the database of poor families.

As of December 2019, a total of 781,943 households and 400,345 households have been assessed in Region XII and BARMM, respectively.

For the Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) Program, DSWD FO XII has

reached a total of 229,014 beneficiaries from 4Ps, 242,686 Indigent Senior Citizens and 157,052 households from Listahanan database of Poor Household as beneficiaries targeted to receive P2,400 for the 2018 and P3,600 for 2019 and 2020, respectively, from the thirty percent (30%) of incremental revenues of TRAIN Law. Also in 2019, some 229,014 4Ps beneficiaries received grants amounting to P824,450,400. A total of 214,686 Social Pensioners received monthly pension amounting to P515,246,400, while UCT Listahanan served 109,621 beneficiaries with a total amount of assistance received of P263,090,400.

For Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-A Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS) Program, a total of 17 municipalities were covered with a total of 705 community subprojects amounting to P1,063,265,485.89 and benefiting over 350,000 households. On the other hand, the agency's Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) has benefited 13,296 households across the region with a total of P74,284,904.14 amount disbursed.

The Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) has provided financial, medical, burial, transportation and food assistance to individuals in crisis. For 2019, DSWD FO XII has served 64,146 clients with a total amount disbursed of P372,077,960.57.

In 2019, Region XII and Maguindanao have experienced 27 disaster incidents such as earthquakes, flashfloods, armed conflicts, landslides, strong winds, social disorganizations, drought/dry spell, and fire, among others, that affected 157,162 families or 784,220 persons. DSWD FO XII provided P53,783,905 as resource augmentation to the local government units.

The Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) Program has released a total of P197,323,010 for various cash and food for work in various villages in the region, benefiting 92,285 families.

Playing a key role in the decommissioning of former More Islamic and Liberation Front

(MILF) fighters, the agency released a total of P902,400,000 as financial assistance to 9,024 beneficiaries as part of the aid packages under the Executive Order (EO) No.70 which focuses on the Normalization Track of Comprehensive Agreement of the Bangsamoro.

The delivery of social welfare and development programs by Local Government Units, through Local Social Welfare and Development Offices (LSWDOS) has seen a remarkable increase. Out of the 53 LSWDOs who underwent Service Delivery Assessment; 10 LSWDOs or 19% reached the minimum expected level of service delivery based on set indicators or Level 2 – “Better Service Delivery”. While 41 LSWDOs or 77% met the minimum expected level of service delivery based on set indicators or Level 1 – “Enhanced Service Delivery”.

The effort exerted by the DSWD FO XII and its partners makes people feel the presence of the government and gives them an opportunity to lift their families out of poverty.

“

***DSWD envisions being the world's standard for the delivery of coordinated social services and social protection for poverty reduction by 2030.***

”



# Organizational Outcome 1:

Well-being of the poor families improved



Couple grows  
dream  
business  
from scratch



10

13



Youth shelter  
inspires Manobo  
kids to dream  
bigger

Farmer  
strikes  
gold in  
vegetable  
farming



17



# Couple grows DREAM BUSINESS from SCRATCH

**LAKE SEBU, South Cotabato** - More than a decade ago, Richard Pingoy was earning a living by driving a motorbike taxi he rented from their neighbor. His wife recalled how they were struggling to cope with their daily needs to survive.

**B**ut Richard, 43, who only finished grade school and was earning enough only to cover their daily food allowance, did not give up his dream to have their own motor parts shop at the heart of the town. In this town, motorcycles are considered king of the road.

His wife, Salvacion, 43, said they were living in small typical wooden-made house, but she never doubted that

their life will change. Starting from scratch, Salvacion revealed they focused on selling fish for years in their community using a small capital they saved from her husband's part-time job income.

The family sacrificed a lot when their small business was growing. They lived without the simplest luxuries as they sensed something great was coming along their way.



**More than 12 years after, the couple now runs their own business at the town proper just the way they dreamed it would be.**

## WELL-BEING OF THE POOR FAMILIES IMPROVED

“We did that for eleven years. The money we put in on our fish business accumulated. We also used the excess money from the government’s assistance,” said Salvacion in her local dialect.

### Learning while doing

More than 12 years after, the couple now runs their own business at the town proper just the way they dreamed it would be.

“I put into practice what I learned from our family development sessions, like how you will give importance to your family, how to manage a small business, and ensuring our children are in school,” she added.

“My source of inspiration was our status in life. We don’t want to die being poor. We did not stop believing that we can make it,” she explained.

Since 2009, the couple’s children, Resyl Feby Zhyn, 15, and Rcyl Yrich Shyn, 11, have been included in the 4Ps, the government’s anti-poverty campaign.

“Back then, education fees in public schools were not free. The 4Ps helped us a lot,” Salvacion said.

“We have proven that our government is working. The monthly grants may be a small amount but it made things possible for us,” she added.

### Government ushers a better life

Earlier this year, the DSWD, along with partners, signed the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the 4Ps law or Republic Act (RA) 11310 where from P500 worth of health grant per month, the program will now provide P750 assistance per month.

The Pingoys were among the thousands of households covered by the scheme. With the education grant for example, families get P300 per month for each elementary and daycare student, P500 per month for each junior high school student and P700 per month for each senior high school student.



“We have proven that our government is working. The monthly grants may be a small amount, but it made things possible for us,” she said.



- In April 2019, President Rodrigo Duterte signed the 4Ps law that will ensure qualified poor households like the farmers, fishermen, homeless families, indigenous peoples, those from the informal sector, and those living in isolated and disadvantaged areas receive monthly education grants.

**Survival life no more**

Now that their life has dramatically changed, Salvacion volunteered to give up their slot in the government program so other families, who are still under survival well-being, can avail of the government’s intervention.

## Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)

Beneficiaries Served

**223,351**



Amount Disbursed

**P4,023,950,100**

# Youth shelter inspires MANOBO KIDS to DREAM BIGGER

KALAMANSIG, Sultan Kudarat - For sixth grade student Jolito Dalud, a 13-year-old Manobo kid with an inborn physical disability, going to school was a daily ordeal.





*Jolito and Manobo school children need not risk their lives with the newly constructed bridge under Kalahi-CIDSS Program.*

Jolito, born with crippled left foot and with at least 60 Manobo children from the remote sitio of Limulan village, have had to trek two hours each day, risking their lives crossing rivers and hills, before eventually reaching school.

“Ginakarga lang ako nila kung magtabuk kami sa sapa o kung kapoy na ko kaayo maglakaw (They used to carry me every time we have to cross rivers or when walking becomes unbearable for me),” said Jolito while holding his crutch.

**A helping hand for Limulan kids**

The children’s parents created a makeshift shelter few meters away from their school. Sitting on top of a hill, the shanty serves as their temporary shelter during the rainy season.

Things started to change when DSWD FO XII, the local government unit of



Kalamansig and local officials and volunteers of Limulan collaborated to address the struggles of the school children.

Together, they built a Kalahi-CIDSS IP Youth Shelter worth P1.91 million. Equipped with amenities, the shelter now serves as a home away from home for Jolito and the 60 other Manobo school children in Limulan village.

“Mas ganahan na kami mu-eskwela kay lami na among



“Ginakarga lang ako nila kung magtabuk kami sa sapa o kung kapoy na ko kaayo maglakaw (They used to carry me every time we have to cross rivers or when walking becomes unbearable for me),” said Jolito.



estaran ug dili na me kinaghanglan mulakaw adlaw-adlaw (Our new shelter encourages us to study harder and that we don't need to trek daily going to school),” said Jolito.

Aside from the youth shelter, Manobo school children are also the beneficiaries of DSWD FO XII donation drive dubbed as “Summer to Remember.” Through the initiative, they received school supplies, uniforms, bags, kitchen utensils, beddings, and other necessities to be used while in school.

### A community awakens

They have also received clothes, shoes, books and other study materials from various individuals and organizations.

Moreover, through the assistance to individuals in crisis situation (AICS) of the agency also extended an educational assistance worth P30,000 for the 60 Manobo school children.

“The various support extended, especially the Kalahi-CIDSS IP youth shelter project, are great encouragement for our Manobo school children who are struggling going to school because of the distance and the lack of facility,” Arnel P. Acuña, Teacher-In-Charge of FB Concha Elementary School in Limulan village.

Kalahi-CIDSS is one of the poverty-alleviation programs of the national government that is being implemented by the DSWD.

The Program utilizes the community-driven development (CDD) approach, which enables communities in targeted poor



*Jolito receives his diploma from the school principal after six years of struggles going to school.*

## WELL-BEING OF THE POOR FAMILIES IMPROVED



and disaster-affected municipalities to identify their own needs, and collectively implement and manage solutions to these needs.

### Dream bigger

For Jolito and the rest of the children, seeing people and organizations rallying behind them in their quest for higher education gives them the confidence to dream of someday bringing value back to their community.

*Manobo school children of FB Concha Elementary School receive school supplies from DSWD and the Local Government Unit of Kalamansig.*

## Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan - A Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS) Program

Sub-Projects Completed

**705**



Amount Disbursed

**P1,063,265,485.49**





## Farmer strikes gold in VEGETABLE FARMING

T'BOLI, South Cotabato - Farmer Johnny Tolentino recalled how he was barely surviving hand-to-mouth the first time he received the P4,000 cash assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office XII (DSWD FO XII) under its Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

Five years ago, Johnny was among the poorest of the poor in the DSWD's list of 4Ps beneficiaries.

"You can't imagine," the 43-year-old man said. "What we needed to eat for lunch, we still needed to earn at breakfast," he added.

Johnny was planting only okra and other vegetables in a half-a-hectare lot that a municipal official in T'boli, South Cotabato province had allowed him to till.

The cash grant he received that year helped him send his children to school at the time when the family was barely surviving.

In the last five years, he worked hard to overcome poverty and started carving a better life for his family. Through sheer hardwork, persistence and a little cash assistance from the government's Sustainable Livelihood Program, their life has improved.

### Unexpected breakthrough

In 2011, the breakthrough came when they heard about the P10,000 loan for 4Ps beneficiaries. Using only about half-a-hectare parcel of land, Johnny took the risk of planting bell peppers, even before the DSWD could release the cash assistance. His bell peppers were already bearing fruit and threatened to be swallowed by weeds when the money came, just in time for him to buy and apply fertilizers.



“What we needed to eat for lunch, we still needed to earn at breakfast,” he added.

From his first harvest, he earned P300,000. With the extra money, Johnny wanted to pay the government loan in full. But when he tried to, he was told that he need not pay the entire amount because the government had scheduled it on a staggered basis.

Johnny used a portion of the amount to grow tomatoes. At first, his tomatoes failed but on the next harvest, he hit the premium price of P900 per crate, almost nine times over the usual buying price of P100. At that time, the supply of tomatoes was scarce.

**There is wealth in farming**

Johnny never thought in his wildest dreams that it was possible for him to earn P2 million in 100 days. This happened only recently when bell peppers and tomatoes hit the highest price in the market. He has paid his debt and rolled the money to grow more bell peppers.

Today, Johnny is one of the largest suppliers of bell peppers in the province, his produce reaching as far as Cagayan de Oro City and Manila. He earns more than P100,000 a month and has bought his own cargo truck.

## Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP)

**4,837** Beneficiaries Served



Amount Disbursed  
**P74,284,904.14**

# Organizational Outcome 2:

Rights of the poor and vulnerable sectors  
promoted and protected



20



Mother of ten years for a better life

Leading the fight against malnutrition

23



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A letter from a volunteer

A day in the life of a social worker

29



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Finding new life, new chances  
at a rehabilitation center

Elders thank government for timely  
release of pension

35

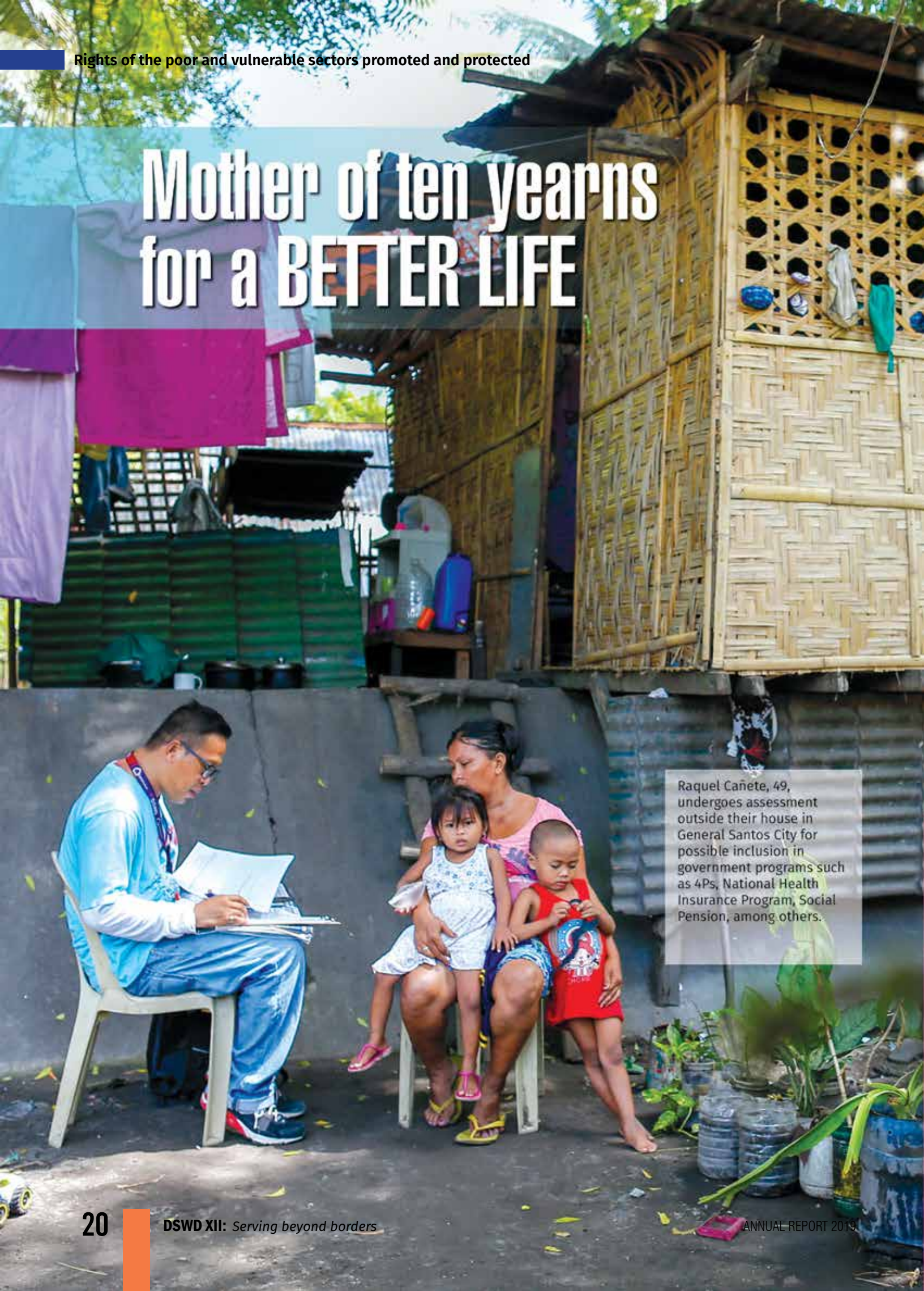


38



Adoption takes heart and courage

# Mother of ten yearns for a BETTER LIFE



Raquel Cañete, 49, undergoes assessment outside their house in General Santos City for possible inclusion in government programs such as 4Ps, National Health Insurance Program, Social Pension, among others.

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY - A mother of ten children earnestly hopes to avail the government's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) to send her children to school.**

A housewife since she got married, Raquel Cañete, 49, who only finished first grade in elementary, said that sending all her children in college to get a degree is next to impossible.

Her husband, Ramon, who only finished fourth grade in primary education, is working in a local construction firm and his weekly income is not even enough to cover all her family's expenses, specially for food.

**Against all odds**

The family's house of unpainted bamboo walling is on a no-build-zone beside a riverbank in the village of Silway Fatima. According to her, if they will be included in the government's anti-poverty program like the 4Ps, it would transform their life.

"I want my children to finish their studies," Raquel said in Filipino while sitting outside her house carrying her youngest daughter.

"Our hope is for them to get a degree so that they would not live in poverty like us," she added.

The Cañetes were among the households currently undergoing assessment as workers hired by the DSWD started their

**Listahanan**

Staff Hired  
**2,216**



Household Assessed  
**1,182,288**

full-scale regionwide activity to identify poor households in Central Mindanao for possible inclusion in several pro-poor government programs such as 4Ps, National Health Insurance Program, Social Pension, among others.

### Reaching the unreachable

The 45-day survey for “Listahanan” or the DSWD’s National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) will cover pre-identified 815,343 households in Region XII and another 556,555 in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director, explained the agency’s Listahanan assessment is an information management

system that identifies who and where the poor are across the region.

“We thank the people for welcoming the DSWD assessors in their homes and for participating in the assessment,” Dir. Espejo said.

### Dynamic data, agile intervention

As a pioneer database to trace and track poor families in the country, it is also being used by other national government agencies and social protection stakeholders. Listahanan is being updated every four years.

*Residents of General Santos City interact with a staff of DSWD during the conduct of regionwide survey for Listahanan .*



Toddlers covered by Supplementary Feeding Program are seen outside a daycare center in Salumping Village, Esperanza town in Sultan Kudarat.



# Leading the FIGHT against MALNUTRITION

**ESPERANZA, Sultan Kudarat - Pricetine Dichol looks after her three children inside their small house cum small convenience store while waiting for her regular costumers.**

The 34-year-old housewife, who finished a degree of management in college, recalled that her second child, Rexcy Rayne, who turned four years old last year, was underweight and was considered malnourished according to the local nutritionist.

“She does not eat vegetables. Although her food intake is normal, there was no changes in her health condition,” Pricetine said.

Deep inside, Pricetine started worrying knowing that malnourished children are vulnerable to infectious diseases.

### **Timely rescue for toddlers**

Fortunately, a Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) for day care facilities was implemented by the DSWD to lessen cases of malnutrition in the provinces and ensure that toddlers continue getting nutritious meals.



“I reached out to day care center in our village and registered my daughter for the program,” she said.

The day care center yearly holds its Summer Feeding Program with breakfast that runs from 8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and lunch that runs from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 noon.

“I reached out to day care center in our village and registered my daughter for the program,” she said.

“Eventually, after more than three months, my daughter’s weight improved,” said Pricetine.

### Nutritious breakfast and lunch

Koronadal, the region’s capital is among 50 towns and cities that offer free breakfast and lunch to all toddlers, a government program under SFP of DSWD.

Last year’s SFP gained positive result based on the consolidated data by the agency as reported by the local government units (LGUs). Out of 6,342 children registered in the program, 3,645 were severely underweight. Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director, reported that across the region children’s health condition dramatically improved.

“Children who are severely underweight improved their nutritional status,” Dir. Espejo said, citing there is a need to work with non-government organizations to sustain the program.



“Eventually, after more than three months, my daughter’s weight improved,” said Pricetine.





Dir. Espejo said the figures were based on the report of 20 of 50 municipalities and cities with verified malnourished children covered by the feeding program.

“This is a positive development. We are still waiting for the terminal reports of other partners from the LGUs,” he said.

The SFP, implemented under DSWD, is the provision of food to children in addition to the regular meals they normally eat at home.

Hot meals were provided to children during snack times or mealtimes five days a week for 120 days.

### A healthier home for every growing child

Aside from the regular feeding, children were also taught proper hand washing while their parents were trained how to prepare healthy meals using resources from their backyard and encouraging them to cultivate vegetable gardens at home.

Merilyn Guerra, SFP focal person, said they allowed the parents or guardians to prepare the meals of the toddlers using indigenous food or local produce available in the communities.

“Most families already have vegetable gardens in their backyard. We involved the parents by allowing them to give counterpart contributions in kind like vegetables from their backyard,” she concluded.

## Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP)

Children Served

**101,395**



Amount Disbursed

**₱183,770,000**

# A LETTER from a VOLUNTEER



SEARCH for OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS 2016

“One does not need to fight and win a war to become a modern day bayani.”



**MARCELO L. GUSANAN**

NATIONAL AWARDEE  
INDIVIDUAL - ADULT CATEGORY



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL VOLUNTEER  
SERVICE COORDINATING AGENCY



## MARCELO GUSANAN

BARANGAY EDAY, COLUMBIO, SULTAN KUDARAT

### Heyu Hlafus

Ako po si Marcelo Gusanan, 43, isang volunteer mula sa katutubong Blaan.

Ako po ay galing sa Barangay Eday, isang 100% Blaan community ng Columbio sa Sultan Kudarat.

Kakambal ng pangalan ng aming lugar ang salitang malayo, magulo at mahirap.

Bago pa man dumating ang Kalahi-CIDSS sa aming lugar, kilala ang Eday bilang “no man’s land” dahil kadalasan, ito ay nagisisilbing exit point ng mga rebelde.

Kapag nagkaroon ng kaguluhan, lahat ng tao ay umaalis at pumupunta sa ibang lugar. May mga panahon na wala na kaming nababalikan. Sunog na ang aming mga bahay at mga kagamitan, pati mga tanim namin na ikinabubuhay, pati mga alagang hayop ay wala na rin.

Maliban dito, isa sa mga problema namin ay ang kawalan ng mapagkukunan ng malinis na tubig.

Ang Eday ang nangunguna sa listahan ng Municipal Health Office sa Bayan ng Columbio na may pinakamaraming kaso ng diarrhea o pananakit ng tiyan dulot ng maruming tubig galing sa bukal sa ilog.

Wala rin kaming matinong paaralan. Iisa lang ang silid para sa buong barangay na kadalasan ay sarado dahil walang guro at mag aaral.

Masasabi ko noon, halos napabayaan kami. Dahil sa malayo at sa hirap ng daan papunta sa amin, hindi kami masyadong naabotan ng tulong. Minsan, naisip ko rin na iwan ang aming lugar.

Dahil sa hirap ng buhay, may mga namatay sa amin dahil sa pagkain ng “kayos”, isang uri ng ube na kulay dilaw na nakakalason kapag hindi tama ang pagkaluto nito.

Ngunit lahat ng ito ay kinaya namin. Ang hindi ko matiis ay ang, sa kabila ng kaawa-awa namin sitwasyon ay may mga taong nanloloko sa amin.

Minsan ang iba sa amin, dahil marami ang di marunong magbilang, kapag bumaba dala ang aming produkto, di alam kung magkano ang binigay na pera o di kaya minsan, pinapalitan lang ng kung anu-ano diyan.

At siguro dahil inisip nila na kaming mga Blaan ay mga walang pinag aralan, may mga tao at organisasyon na lumapit sa amin, nagsasabing bigyan kami ng tulong o proyekto, ng ganito, ng ganyan, kung anu-ano pinapangako, nililista at pinapapirma ng aming pangalan, tapos hanggang doon lang, wala nang bumabalik, ginagamit kami para makakuha sila ng mga pundo o proyekto.

Kaya noong dumating ang Kalahi-CIDSS. Hindi agad kami nagtiwala. Baka isa na namang modus.

## Rights of the poor and vulnerable sectors promoted and protected

Ang hirap pala, kasi kami ang gagawa, mula sa pagplano, sa pagpapatupad, hanggang sa pag-sustain nito. Pero, naramdaman namin ang aming halaga. Naramadaman namin ang respeto ng Programa sa mga IP dahil sa kauna-unahan ay hinayaan kaming, kami ang magdesisyon at magplano kung ano sa tingin namin ang mas nakakabuti sa amin.

Ang dami naming natutunan dahil naramdaman namin na pinagkakatiwalaan kami, kahit na karamihan sa amin ay “no read, no write”. Kailangan naming suklian ang pagtitiwala na iyon, ipakita sa lahat na kahit mga Blaang kami, may kakayahan din kami. Kailangan namin ipatupad ng tama dahil sa huli kami rin ang makaka-benepisyo o di kaya masisi, lalo na nang mga susunod sa amin.

Dahil sa mga sakripisyo na pinangunahan ko, unti-unting kaming nakilala. Kami ang palaging number one sa Municipal Inter-Barangay Forum-Participatory Resource Allocation (MIBF-PRA).

Sa tulong-tulong ng bawat isa sa amin, nakapagpatayo kami ng two-classroom na school building, water system level II at solar dryer sa Kalahi-CIDSS. Kami ang nagging modelo ng ibang barangay sa pagpapatupad ng mga proyekto ng Kalahi-CIDSS.


Dahil sa Kalahi-CIDSS, napansin ang aming kakayanan. Kung dati ay halos lumuluhod na kami sa iba't-ibang ahensya para humingi ng tulong, ngayon, maraming mga pribado at ahensya ng gobyerno ang nagdala ng kani-kanilang proyekto, mula sa agrikultura, kalusugan, edukasyon at marami pang serbisyo na dati ay hindi namin nakukuha.

Dahil sa mga natutunan namin sa Kalahi-CIDSS, kaya na namin ipatupad kahit gaano kalaking proyekto na pumapasok sa aming barangay. Alam namin kung niloloko kami ng mga contractor dahil alam namin ang bawat detalye ng proyekto.

Dahil sa Kalahi-CIDSS, napatunayan ko na hindi sa tribu, hindi sa antas ng edukasyon at pamumuhay ang pagtulong. Ang pagtulong ay isang bukal na gawain upang mapabuti ang buhay ng iba. Ipagmalaki kung ano at sino tayo.

Hindi ko na kailangan sabihin kung anong klaseng leader ako ng mga Blaang kasi ako ay naniniwala na ang uri ng pamayanan ay reflection ng uri ng lider mayroon ang isang lugar. Ang pag-unlad ay hindi hinihintay, ito ay ipinaglalaman at pinagpapaguran.

Sa ngayon, mula sa pagiging “no man’s land” ay umabot na kami ng 1,500 na naninirahan sa Eday. Masagana, masaya at tahimik na namumuhay.



Dahil sa Kalahi-CIDSS, napatunayan ko na hindi sa tribu, hindi sa antas ng edukasyon at pamumuhay ang pagtulong. Ang pagtulong ay isang bukal na gawain upang mapabuti ang buhay ng iba. Ipagmalaki kung ano at sino tayo.



# A day in the LIFE OF A SOCIAL WORKER

**CITY OF KORONADAL, South Cotabato - At 7:30 in the morning, Janisa Radiamoda, 28, has prepared herself for a challenging new day. She was the first to arrive in the office that sunny Tuesday garbed in her bright blue floral blouse. She sorted some documents to ensure that her table looks well arranged and tidy. A few minutes later, a man comes in and handed over the papers, her first client of the day.**

“Magandang umaga, Sir,” Janisa greets him with a bright smile while checking the documents given to her.

Janisa, a native of Lanao del Sur, has been working since 2015 as social welfare officer II at the sub-office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) in this city. Her daily job involves assessing walk-in clients needing immediate assistance from the government.

She finds fulfillment seeing the smile of each client she serves on a daily basis. She understands that her role is vital in bringing the government’s crisis intervention program within reach, especially of poverty-stricken families.

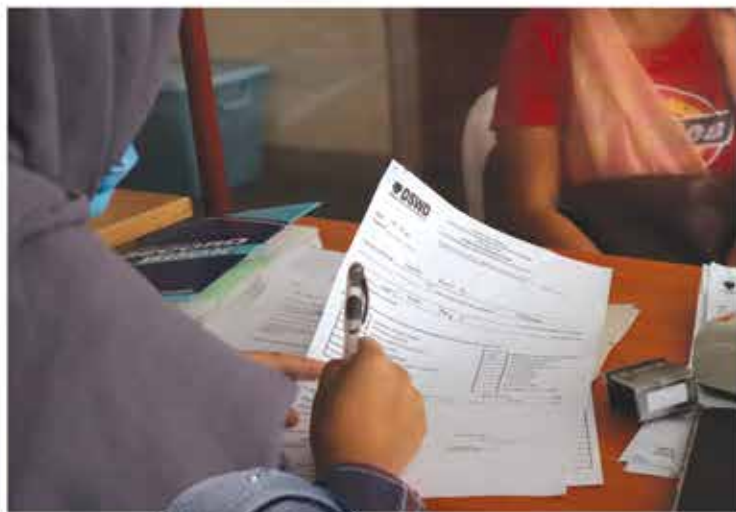
### **Choosing the road less travelled**

Janisa recalled that during her college days, many poked fun of the social work profession. People did not see the value of finishing four grueling years in college just to end up helping in relief operations, distributing packs of canned goods and noodles to victims of flash floods, fire, and other calamities. They failed to see the importance of attending to the needs of internally displaced individuals and people in life-changing crisis situations.



Despite this unpopularity, something inside her refused to give up her dream of becoming a social worker. Perhaps she was just too stubborn but she never lost pride in being a woman in her profession.

“Deep inside, I knew that I really wanted to be a social worker, no matter what other people were telling me. This is me and this is my life choice,” Janisa added.



“The most difficult part of being a social worker is the tendency to absorb the various emotional state of our clients. As time went by, however, the stories I hear from different people become my source of motivation to serve even more,” Janisa said as she handed over a guarantee letter to Noel Llabar, 47, her first client of the day.



**Crisis intervention is not a lost cause**

Since 2015, Noel has been on dialysis. His request for financial assistance was granted in less than ten minutes. He said that the agency’s CIU has been of great help in easing the difficulty of coping up with the financial demands for his continuing medication and treatment.

“Halos lahat ng ari-arian at pangkabuhayan namin ay naibenta na namin para matustusan ang aking gamutan (Almost all of our properties and livelihood means have been sold to sustain my medication),” Noel said.

“Tay Noel, ibigay niyo ang guarantee letter na ito sa dialysis center ninyo para mabawasan ang inyong bayarin (Give this to your service provider to lessen your bill),” Janisa said as she gave him instruction for the next steps.

The agency’s CIU provides medical, educational, burial, and transportation assistance to persons in crisis situations, specifically those belonging to the informal

sector and other poor, marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged individuals.

**Living a purpose-driven life**

“Personally, I care about people and I care about life. That’s why I’m here despite the challenges we go through every day,” she said. “We need to let the public know that the government is ready to provide services for those in need in this unprecedented and difficult time,” Janisa said as she accommodated another client seeking assistance for her hypertension and diabetes medication.

At 6:30 pm, Janisa was still interviewing her 30th client of the day. The CIU closes until the last client is served. Janisa does not mind extending a few hours each day and leaving the office later than usual.

At 7:00 pm, Janisa packed her things. After caring for the needs of other people, it was time to take care of her family’s needs as well.

**Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS)**

Clients Served

**64,146**



Amount Provided

**P372,077,960.57**

# Finding NEW LIFE, NEW CHANCES at a REHABILITATION CENTER

From 2018 to 2019, there was a 50% increase in numbers of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) including Children at Risk (CAR) that was recorded in the data gathered by Regional Juvenile Justice and Welfare Committee (RJJWC) XII.

With the increase in number of CICL, the Regional Rehabilitation Center for the Youth (RRCY) needs to expand to properly serve residents in enhancing their psychological, emotional and psychosocial well-being.

From the old building in Tupi, South Cotabato, it was transferred to Tantangan, South Cotabato that occupies 5,000 sqm.

## A facility that cares and restores

To provide a conducive treatment center and rehabilitation facility, DSWD Secretary Rolando

Joselito Bautista inducted the P32.9 million rehabilitation center on October 18, 2019. The state-of-the-art facility comes with admin building, fencing and recreation center under Centers and Residential Care Facilities (CRCF).

The facility also boasts of a covered court with a stage that provides a venue for socialization, community integration and recovery of the children living inside the compound. This is the largest rehabilitation facility in Central Mindanao.







Among the residents of RRCY, two are now pursuing formal education.

One of them is Nonoy, a 24-year old from Tupi, South Cotabato. Not his real name, Nonoy was charged with an offense when he was still 16 years old but has been given the opportunity to study for a college degree.

In 2016, he registered at the South East Asian Institute of Technology (SEAIT) to study Criminology.

“When I entered RRCY, I felt hopeless and empty. Then, they opened the door for us to get education. I have studied hard all these years. Now, I’m on my 4th year, I look forward to the day I finally become a policeman,” Nonoy gratefully shared.

Nonoy was found guilty of the crime he committed eight years ago but the court favored him with a suspended sentence. He was not sentenced to jail on the condition that he does not commit another crime within a specified period.

#### From broken to a whole new person

Sarah Lucman, the Center Head of RRCY XII maintains the holistic approach towards protecting the rights of the children who found themselves in difficult circumstances

Once inside the facility, CICL are called residents. They are referred by the court to undergo restoration while waiting for the suspension of their sentence. The therapeutic and physiological treatment lasts not lesser than six months.

#### Providing skills training and education

As part of their rehabilitation, RRCY provides trainings for the residents to build their productivity skills and encourage them to pursue livelihood projects which will allow them to earn an income once they go back to their community.

To do this, the center taps government agencies such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for skills training and the Department of Agriculture (DA) for the provision of seedlings for the center’s vegetable garden.

Other therapeutic activities which are done regularly include basketball, vegetable gardening and doormat making.



by providing proper care, protection, development, treatment and social reintegration in the community.

“For us, working in RRCY is both a challenge and opportunity. It is a challenge to help these young men who come from different backgrounds and upbringing. It is also an opportunity to expand our understanding. Most of them are products of an unfavorable

home environment. They are yearning for a chance to grow into adulthood within a caring environment and to build their own identity,” she said.

Meanwhile, Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director said that parents, educators, schools, community and government agencies need to join hands to prevent and reduce risk factors which may push children towards behaviors that may harm them and bring them in conflict with the law.

“There is enough evidence to prove that with the right kind of prevention and recovery, CICL adjust, reform, and return to the community as matured and responsible adults,” Dir. Espejo added.

As a treatment facility of the Department for the rehabilitation of CICL whose sentences have been suspended, the RRCY provides counselling, values formation and psychosocial sessions, formal and non-formal education, health program and recreational and cultural activities, among others.

### On the right path

This year, Nonoy is poised to receive two documents – a diploma that marks the fruit of his hardwork as a student and the dismissal order from the court - freeing him from his tumultuous childhood and changing the course of his life for the better.

## CENTERS AND INSTITUTIONS



Amount Disbursed

**P22,928,900.02**

Clients Served  
Regional Rehabilitation for YOUTH

**24**



**75**

Clients Served  
Center for HANDICAPPED



**27**

Clients Served  
Reception and Study  
Center for CHILDREN



**31**

Clients Served  
Home for GIRLS



# Caring for the elderly with **TIMELY** release of PENSION

**LAKE SEBU, South Cotabato -** George Palencia was sitting in the corner of a gymnasium in this town, waiting for his name to be called by social workers during the distribution of state's monthly financial assistance to senior citizens.

Palencia's mother, Raquel in her 60s, could not personally claim her pension as she was in nearby town of Isulan in Sultan Kudarat province during the time of their payout.

"I brought with me my mother's picture holding the latest calendar and her authorization which was approved by the local government unit," George said.

As soon as he received the P3,000 financial assistance, George immediately drove his motorbike to the nearest remittance center to send the money to his sister where his mother was temporarily staying.

## **Easing the burden for families**

"They need this money for her hypertension maintenance. We're glad it came just in time," he said, showing the money transfer receipt.





Another recipient, Teresita Maglunob, 73, a resident of Sto. Niño village, expressed her gratitude for the timely release of the monthly financial assistance from the DSWD. She also needed to buy medicines for her hypertension.

“The money is a big help for me. I thank the government for looking after our basic needs,” she said.

The DSWD handles the implementation of Republic Act (RA) No. 9994 or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 where indigent senior citizens could receive

a monthly stipend worth P500 from the state.

#### **A law that cares**

RA 9994 defines indigent senior citizens as “any elderly who is frail, sickly or with disability, and without pension or permanent source of income, compensation or financial assistance from his/her relatives to support his/her basic needs, as determined by the DSWD.

Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director, said the government has released more than one billion peso for the needs of indigent senior citizens in Central Mindanao.

**Timely assistance matters**

Naira Aratuc, Chief of Protective Services Division, said the agency spent P1,062,429,000 for the pensions of 163,740 out of 222,000 registered indigent senior citizens in the region.



“They need this money for her hypertension maintenance. We’re glad it came just in time,” said George.



**Social Pension Program**

Amount Disbursed

**₱1,062,429,000**



Beneficiaries Served

**163,740**



# Adoption takes HEART and COURAGE

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY** – For couple Cynthia Mae and Francis Pingoy, opening their heart and home to a child in need of love is a long process and not an easy decision.

Cynthia is a government employee while her husband is a businessman. The foster parents from General Santos City has been searching for years for a daughter until they adopted seven-year old Alyssa.

In 2018, the couple began their adoption proceedings. They attended series of briefings and seminars on adoption rules and advice on dealing with kids. During the process, they realized that the ultimate purpose of adopting a child was not to fulfill their need but to “unite a child with a loving and caring family.”

“I understood the legal aspect of adoption since it is close to my field of work. I am aware that if we skip the process, it is possible that we could lose the child because we have no right to stop the biological parents,” she said.

“We fought for Alyssa because we love her. The process we went through was not easy. I can’t explain the joy I felt when the court finally released the adoption paper to us,” she added.

### Experiencing the joy of parenting

Alyssa is multi talented. She has won several school competition since she was in grade one. She also sings at their local church.

A consistent honor student, her daughter is also fluent in English and can compete in declamation as she is articulate.

“Francis and I would like to share our appreciation and gratitude to DSWD for tirelessly and patiently working with us to complete Alyssa’s adoption process,” Cynthia said.

“Their dedication and guidance gave us the support we needed during our journey and we truly appreciate that the agency accepted and helped us through,” she added.

### Working for a child’s best interest

Melchy Franco, a social welfare in charge of Alyssa’s case, said they filed in court in 2018 and a year after the issuance of adoption degree came out.

“I feel fulfilled because I became an instrument for the best interest of the child,” Franco said, as she urged other couples to follow the legal process.



Adoption is a socio-legal process of providing a permanent family to a child whose parents have voluntarily or involuntarily relinquished parental authority over the child.



“Every child has the right to live with their parent and it’s their right to have their own family,” she said.

Nationwide, the Philippines Orphanage Foundation noted more than 2 million orphans in the country, with around 15 orphans per square mile.

### Children deserve a loving family

Last year, a data from the Department showed around 852 cases, both domestic and inter-country adoption.

The agency defines adoption as a “socio-legal process of providing a permanent family to a child whose parents have voluntarily or involuntarily relinquished parental authority over the child.” Neglected, abused, abandoned, and children with special needs are legally available for adoption. A child who has had no parental care for at least 6 months is declared as an “abandoned child.”

The Philippine Domestic Adoption Act of 1998 or Republic Act 8552 established the rules for adoption.

## FAQS under R.A. 8552

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR DOMESTIC ADOPTION

- A Filipino citizen of legal age.
- Not convicted in any crime involving “moral turpitude”.
- Capable of caring for children (emotionally, psychologically, financially).
- At least 16 years older than the adopted child.
- For non-Filipinos with the above qualifications, they may still adopt as long as they have been living in the Philippines for 3 years prior to the adoption application. They must be certified by their home country of having the legal capacity for adoption.

## Adoption and Foster Care

- 7** Children Placed for Domestic Adoption
- 6** Children Placed for Legally Available for Adoption
- 14** Children Endorsed for Inter-Country Adoption





# Organizational Outcome 3:

Immediate relief and early recovery of  
disaster victims/survivors ensured



42



A community leader  
rises from the rubble

Former communist rebels  
rebuild peaceful lives



48

51



Former MILF combatants  
shift to productive civilian life

Transforming a community  
through a footbridge



53

Residents affected by the series of earthquakes at the evacuation center in Kidapawan City wait for their turn to get the financial assistance from DSWD's Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation in Makilala, North Cotabato.



# A community leader rises from THE RUBBLE



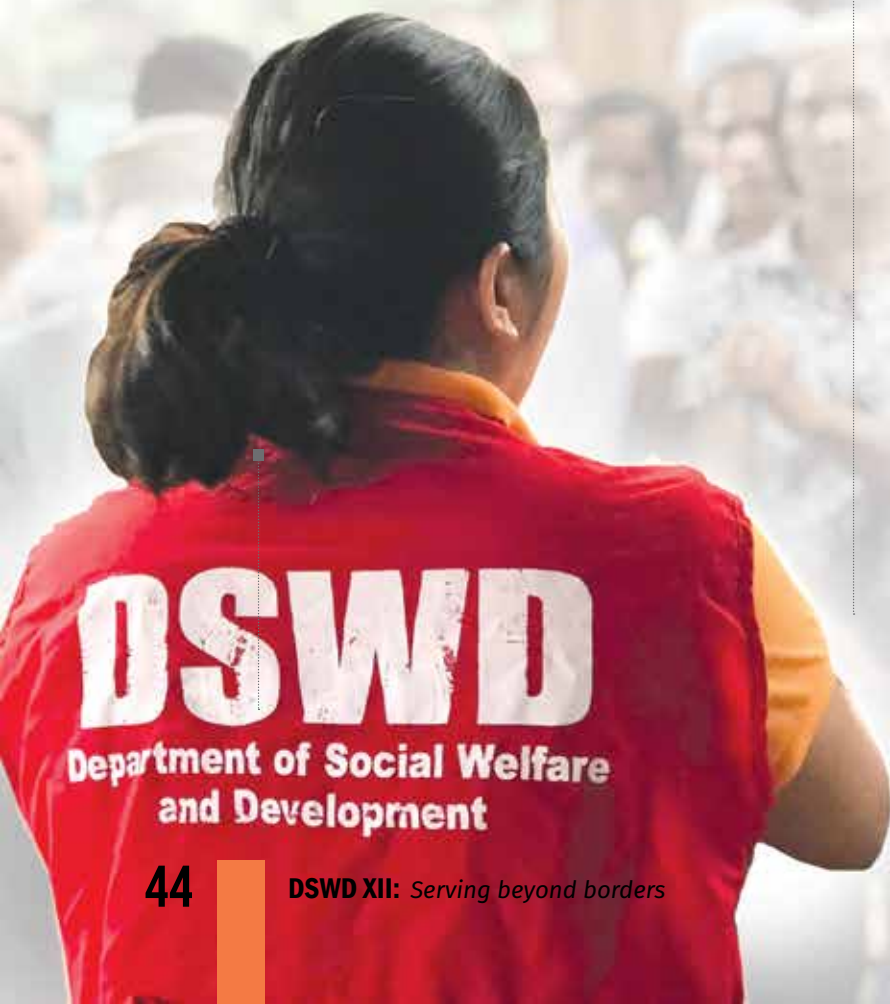


**MAKILALA, Cotabato** – On a humid afternoon, Arlene Lindasan walks around the evacuation center holding a megaphone and telling people to maintain cleanliness within the evacuation camp. For four weeks, earthquakes shook the island which destroyed numerous towns and flattened their houses.

**A** designated camp manager, Arlene, 35, a 4Ps parent leader, is one of thousands of families affected by the 6.6-magnitude quake that ripped through the island of Mindanao on October 29 with aftershocks that lasted for four weeks. Her house, situated not far from the evacuation center, was partially destroyed. Now, it is impossible for them to return to their village due to the high risk of landslides.

In spite of her loss and the serious trauma caused by the earthquake, Arlene did not hesitate to respond to the crisis.

“In a matter of seconds, I lost everything,” she said. “But it did not prevent me from



helping my neighbors. Although my family was affected, I still want to help because these people need me,” said Arlene.

### Leaders are forged in crisis

Here at the camp, she took on additional responsibilities to care for the rest of more than a hundred families displaced by the earthquakes.

“I’m the one making our requests to the DSWD for our supplies. I see to it that the needs of the evacuees are provided,” she said in Filipino.

“When there are visitors and other agency representatives, I’m speaking on behalf of the people,” she added.

Another evacuee, Linda Tabalba, 42, described Arlene as a good leader who always looks after the needs of others inside the camp.

“She has leadership skills. She makes sure that everybody is provided with relief supplies,” said Linda.

Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director, acknowledged Arlene’s contribution, adding her efforts shows a true Filipino value.

### Resilient communities recover

For 2019, the DSWD has given out a total of P38.6 million worth of assistance to more than 43 thousand families in the towns of Arakan, Magpet, Matalam, M’lang, President Roxas, Tulunan, Kabacan and this town.



“She has leadership skills. She makes sure that everybody is provided with relief supplies,” said Linda.

## Disaster Response

Families Affected

**157,162**



Assistance Provided

**P53,786,905**

# CRISIS RESPONSE Timeline



- In 2019, people across Cotabato and neighboring provinces were hit by natural calamities. A 6.6 magnitude quake struck the town of Tulunan on October 29 and a 6.5 magnitude quake struck in the same area two days later. Both quakes were believed to be part of a “sequence of events from interrelated faults” in the region, according to government seismologists.



- Days after the quakes, many people were staying at temporary evacuation sites as the national government struggled to reach the affected areas. With thousands of aftershocks, officials feared that many abandoned structures have been compromised to a point where they are no longer safe.



- Assuring survivors of assistance, the DSWD FO XII immediately dispatched its workers to help people affected on the ground, sending relief goods to quake-hit areas. The agency said “it has enough relief supplies”.



- The Philippines sits in the Ring of Fire, an area in the Pacific Ocean basin known for seismic upheavals and volcanic eruptions.
- Volunteers from the Bureau of Fire protection unload from a cargo truck relief supplies for families affected by the earthquake in Makilala, Cotabato.
- DSWD regional director Cezario Joel Espejo leads the distribution of relief assistance to people displaced by the earthquakes in the village of Malasila in the town of Makilala, Cotabato on November 2, 2019.
- DSWD Sec. Bautista visits the wake of pregnant woman and a retired government employee killed during earthquake. Sec. Bautista vowed more aid to fatalities of earthquake in Tulunan, Cotabato on October 30.
- Two mobile storage units from the United Nations World Food Programme were set up in Kidapawan City, Cotabato. Each mobile storage has a capability to store 1,600 cubic metric tons of goods.





# FORMER communist rebels rebuild PEACEFUL LIVES



**LAKE SEBU, South Cotabato - Deep in the mountains of Lake Sebu, former rebel combatants have decided to turn the page anew. Tired from running against government forces pursuing them, they have finally decided to give up their struggle and live a peaceful civilian life.**

Locals packed the medium-sized gymnasium in this village to witness an important event. Former rebels were formally abandoning their old life by surrendering their arms to the government. The New Peoples Army (NPA) has waged the longest rebellion in the Philippines and were responsible for attacks against public and private installations costing countless lives.

After pledging to fully support the government's campaign against their comrades, the returnees set on fire two flags of their organization, a symbol of their commitment to the government.

### Choosing the right side

"Life is horrible inside our organization. I want my family to live a peaceful life," Jose, in his 50s, said in Filipino during the ceremony.





“Many of our comrades want to come back but we need to prove to them that we chose the right side,” he added.

Jose, who was not able to finish even elementary grade, was among the hundreds of former NPA communist rebels across the region that have received financial assistance as the government continuously strengthened its campaign to end the cycle of violence.

Specifically, they benefited from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Crisis Intervention Unit, a program that provides financial assistance to people in difficult circumstances or transitioning to a new life.

### **Surrendering to peace**

Jose and his son Eloi (not their real names) from Sitio Lomiyun, both self-confessed guerrillas who both received P2,400 cash aid from the DSWD,



personally thanked the government looking into their needs as they integrate to a community and live productive lives.

“We have decided to give up fighting against the government because we are tired and we want a life that is peaceful,” said Jose during the distribution of their cash grants.

During the ceremony, hundreds of former guerrillas in the region benefited from the DSWD’s ongoing program supporting the implementation of President Rodrigo Duterte’s Executive Order (EO) No. 70 in a bid to end the local communist armed conflict.

### **An outpour of support**

Under EO 70, the government committed to prioritize and harmonize the delivery of basic



“Many of our comrades want to come back but we need to prove to them that we chose the right side,” he added.

services and social development packages in conflict-affected areas and vulnerable communities, facilitate societal inclusivity and ensure active participation of all sectors of society in the pursuit of the country’s peace agenda.

“We thank and appreciate the efforts of our partners from the local government unit of Lake Sebu and the men and officers of the 27th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army,” said Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director.

Dir. Espejo said soldiers from the 27th Infantry Battalion facilitated the surrender of former rebels while other national government agencies, like the TESDA, provided scholarship grants for their children.

In addition, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education and Department of Labor and Employment also provided assistance to the returnees during the event dubbed as the state’s caravan, to bring government services closer to the people.

Considered as the Asia’s longest running insurgency group, the NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

The 5,000-member guerrilla force has been waging a rebellion in the countryside since 1969, making the insurgency one of the world’s longest and deadliest.

## End Local Communist Armed Conflict Program

Beneficiaries Served

**1,861**



Amount Disbursed

**P21,153,196.51**





# Former MILF combatants shift to PRODUCTIVE CIVILIAN life

**SULTAN KUDARAT, Maguindanao – Inside a small, makeshift bunkhouse, Abusama Sarad walked and put down his rifle on a bed in front of him before he started their Friday prayer.**

An hour later, the 48-year-old man, a native of Maguindanao province, said they prayed for peace all over Mindanao. He said their fear of having no peace agreement with the government vanished like a mist in the sea.

Abusama, clad in green t-shirt with decommissioning marking at the back, admitted that he has been in several battles against security forces in decades and its time to focus this time with his family.

“I am longing to have a normal life. The decommissioning is the right time for us to take another journey in our lives to be with our families,” said Abusama while having a lunch with his comrades at Camp Darapanan, the main headquarters of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Abusama is just one of the thousands of former rebels that began decommissioning firearms following the historic passage of a law giving the former separatist group autonomy last year. The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), is a zone

made up of at least five southern provinces, where MILF will oversee self-rule until local voters elect their own parliament by 2022.

### Fulfilling BARMM’s promise

Under BARMM, the MILF controls many local government functions, including taxation and education, and it will allow Muslim Filipinos to incorporate Islamic law into their justice system.

“After the law was ratified and during the first phase, about 30 percent of our combatants started decommissioning,” said Mohagher Iqbal, the MILF’s then peace negotiator.

“The second phase will start after the plebiscite and the last batch will happen after the plebiscite the including the appointment of the leaders that will form the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,” Iqbal said.

The MILF split from the MNLF in 1978, after the latter dropped the fight for independence. The MILF pressed on with the guerrilla warfare that had left many areas in the mineral-rich



DSWD workers release the financial assistance of decommissioned former combatants of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao.

MILF fighters are seen in this photo taken in January 2019 inside their camp in Sultan Kudarat Maguindanao receiving government aid.

south underdeveloped, where large clans controlled local economy and politics.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) played a key role in the decommissioning of former MILF fighters, with the agency releasing millions of funds to provide financial assistance of decommissioned former combatants.

### The struggle is over

In September last year, President Rodrigo Duterte, DSWD Secretary Rolando Joselito Bautista and other government officials, witnessed the decommissioning of 1,190 ex-combatants of MILF, who turned over hundreds of firearms. The ceremony took place inside the gymnasium in Simuay, a district in Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao.

The decommissioning is part of the agreement signed by both the MILF and the government five years ago.

### Development awaits

DSWD FO XII facilitated the distribution of the Bangsamoro Transitory Family Support Package amounting to P80,000 and another P20,000 for the Livelihood Settlement Grant to each returnee.

“It shows our government’s sincerity to deliver its promise of assistance

to our MILF brothers and sisters. After years of armed conflict, we want them to reintegrate into society and enjoy a peaceful and productive life,” Cezario Joel C. Espejo, DSWD regional director said.

The aid packages form part of the Socio-Economic Program component provided for under Executive Order (EO) No. 79 signed on March 2019 which focuses on the Normalization Track of Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro, the final peace agreement signed between the government and MILF.

Norhata Benito, DSWD FO XII pogram head on Bangsamoro Normalization said that the collaborative efforts of various agencies are now gaining through provision of appropriate programs and services to decommissioned combatants.

“The agency has released a total of P902,400,000 to 9024 beneficiaries of the program,” Benito added.

Apart from those ex-MILF fighters who turned in their weapons, another 35 percent of the MILF force would be decommissioned in 2020 with the remainder to follow between 2021 and 2022.

## Socio-Economic Programs for Normalization on the Bangsamoro

Beneficiaries Served

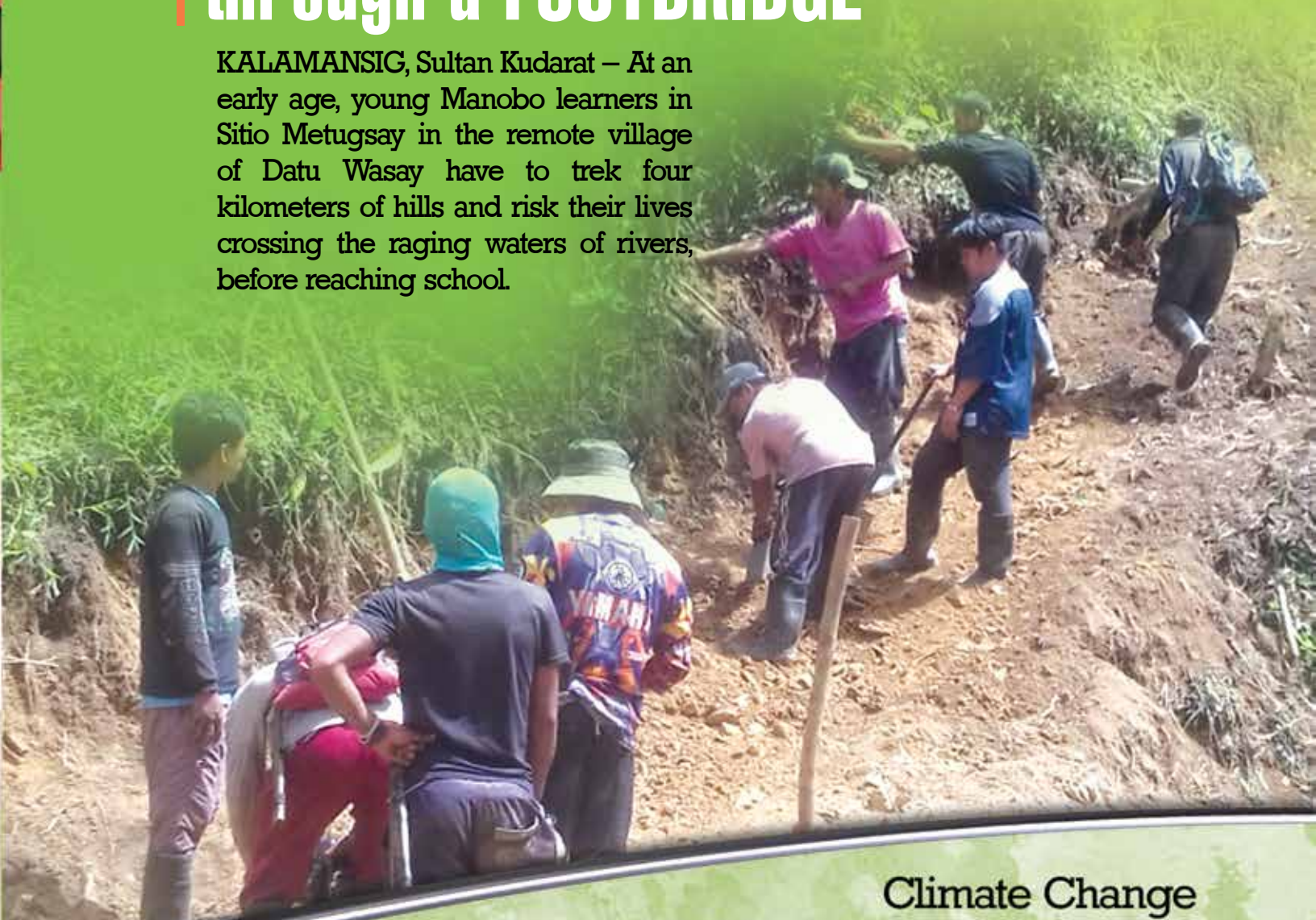
**9,024**



Amount Disbursed  
**P902,400,000**

# Transforming a community through a FOOTBRIDGE

KALAMANSIG, Sultan Kudarat – At an early age, young Manobo learners in Sitio Metugsay in the remote village of Datu Wasay have to trek four kilometers of hills and risk their lives crossing the raging waters of rivers, before reaching school.



Climate Change  
Adaptation and Mitigation  
(CCAM)

Beneficiaries Served

**92,285**



Amount Disbursed

**P197,323,010**

## Immediate relief and early recovery of disaster victims/survivors ensured

During the rainy season, school children are in danger when the flood waters surged, having to wade through strong currents or take other longer alternative routes to get to school.

For day care teacher Lourdes Belamia, nothing is more important everyday than seeing her learners arrive safely in their classroom.

“I am always weary during rainy days. Some of my learners would miss our class after a flood and later would simply drop out. Our kids desperately needed a safer way to continue learning,” teacher Lourdes said.

Manobo farmers in Sitio Metugsay are considered the town’s main coffee producers. However, when rainy season comes they would be cut off for days and are not able to deliver their produce in the market. As a consequence, they are not able to buy their basic necessities. This means a substantial loss of income, teacher Lourdes added.

Today, the struggles of Manobo villagers have become a thing of the past. The community has been chosen as beneficiary of DSWD’s Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM), a program which focuses on alleviating the long-term impacts of climate change.

Like other villages, Datu Wasay has been identified as an affected and vulnerable community of climate change in town. The CCAM employed a cash-for-work mechanism to rehabilitate affected communities and ensure that the long-term hazards and risks of climate change will be reduced.

The villagers had to attend meetings and orientations to carefully plan, organize and implement their chosen community project. Ultimately, they agreed on the construction of the Hanging Foot Bridge alleviating the plight of 100 families in the village.

### United against climate change

With the synergized efforts and cooperation of the community, the construction project amounted to P132,600. The villagers were able to participate in the construction project to augment their daily needs. Within 10 days of intensive work the foot bridge was constructed.

“Our government conveys its strong commitment to empower communities by providing opportunities for income generating projects through manpower and labor,” Cezario Joel Espejo, DSWD regional director said.

Dir. Espejo added that in Kalamansig, the government has allotted some P2.18 million for projects with cash-for-work components to benefit a total of 990 families.

Meanwhile, Norhata Benito, CCAM focal person said that a total of P197.32 million was spent in various cash-for-work initiatives in Region XII, benefiting 92,285 individuals in 2019.

### Bridge to a hopeful future

For teacher Lourdes, she need not worry anymore about the safety of her school children. For her, the DSWD’s Cash-for-Work served as an instrument, not just in building a physical bridge, but also building the dreams of the young Manobo children.



# Organizational Outcome 4:

Continuing compliance of social welfare and development agencies to standards in the delivery of social services ensured



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Social enterprise provides healthy snacks to school children



# Social enterprise provides healthy snacks to school children

**POLOMOLOK, South Cotabato - Imagine the aroma of a freshly baked pandesal at 4am. As Filipinos, we always want to have pandesal in our dining table every time we wake up in the morning. Some would pair this with brewed coffee while some prefer to have it with tsokolate - a traditional Filipino hot chocolate drink.**

**P**andesal is a typical bread roll in the Philippines. It tastes slightly sweet, soft and fluffy. But there is an exceptionally delicious kind that can only be found along Gensan Drive, Koronadal City, South Cotabato. It is called NutriPan, short-term for Nutritious Pandesal created and produced by Mahintana Foundation Incorporated or MFI.

At first glance, it's very similar to popular breads like the one by Farmer's Bread that contains whole grain and additives like fiber, vitamin B and minerals. However, their pandesal are also added with delectable and all organic vegetables with variety of bread products to choose from.

They offer bread with vegetable fillings such as pan de monggo, pan de ube, pan de kamote, pan de kalabasa, pan de coco, pan de tsokolate and their best-seller pan de pinya. The latter, being a product of their partnership with Dole Philippines Inc., is exclusively available in their branch in Polomolok.

Each bread reasonably costs between P5-P15 to fit the daily average allowance of a student.

## **Nutritious breads within reach**

The Nutripan Project was founded by MFI in partnership with some LGU's and private companies to respond to the lack of nutritious snacks available around schools and communities.

Formerly called as Kapit Bisig Para sa Kabataan (Alliance for Children) the project was launched in 2008 to reduce malnutrition which was prevalent among school children by improving access to healthy and nutritious snack foods in and around public and private schools.

According to an earlier survey, nearly 20% of children in Koronadal City and nearby Surallah consume junk foods including unfortified breads as there are no available snacks in their schools and communities. The goal was to deliver affordable and healthy alternative to junk food.

Their first branch was opened in the municipality of T'boli in South Cotabato last 2013 due to the increasing cases of malnourished students among school children in the area. Today, they have four operating bread houses strategically located in Polomolok, Tupi, and Koronadal. MFI will open another branch in Lake Sebu before 2020 ends. All their branches are located near schools for easy access to school children and communities.

Designed as a social business, NutriPan will soon engage in commercial business considering the strong demand for nutritious breads in the market.

## **Scaling up with local farmers**

Aside from addressing concerns on the nutritional gap among the students, Nutripan





also generates opportunities for local farmers in the province. The income of the bakery is equally divided between its operational cost and the farmer-providers of the raw ingredients.

Based on the operation of the existing Nutripan branches MFI, about 20-50 kilograms of vegetables/raw materials per day as bread fillings are needed. This quantity is about 600 - 1,500 kilograms of vegetables per month.



With an average price per kilogram of P30 for vegetable, farmers or vegetables producers can earn as much as P18,000 to P45,000 per month as supplementary income.

With a production scale like this, DSWD chose to partner with MFI for their year-round Supplemental Feeding Program in identified educational institutions in the region.

### Spreading wholesome goodness

The DSWD recently recognized MFI for its outstanding contribution to the programs of the agency. The award is given to social enterprises to encourage others to support the programs and services of the department.



Nutripan is the only bakeshop in South Cotabato that conforms to Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI)

As Martiniano Magdolot, President and CEO of MFI said in an interview, they are delighted with the commendations they got from the DSWD Central Office. Indeed, their efforts are reaping good results.

He also thanked DSWD FO XII for helping them learn to audit their business operations.

“They provided us with additional knowledge and help improved the documentation of the foundation’s institutional and legal documents. The assistance provided by DSWD FO XII

enabled us to upgrade our policies, guidelines and procedures especially in complying with laws, regulations, set by the government but also, of other funding donors (local, national and international),” Magdolot said.

Presently, MFI is planning an expansion through promotion and networking. They are ready to upscale and expand Nutripan to other areas in the region.

They are calling the support and commitment of other LGUs to advocate and provide access to affordable and ready-to-eat nutritious bread in selected villages of the region.

*MFI is headquartered in the municipality of Polomolok. It has received Level II accreditation by DSWD in complying with the standards of National Government Agencies in implementing social welfare and development programs. They continue to strive to be, “a dynamic organization working towards sustainability and resilient communities” for more than 40 years and counting.*



## Social Welfare and Development Agencies (SWADAs) Accreditation and Registration

- 8** Social Welfare Agencies Registered and Accredited
- 186** Daycare Centers
- 187** Daycare Workers Accredited
- 754** Civil Society Organizations with Certificate of Accreditations



# Organizational Outcome 5:

Delivery of Social Welfare and Development (SWD) Programs by Local Government Units through Local Social Welfare and Development Offices (LSWDOs) improved



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Winning support for the bayanihan spirit



Empowering early childhood centers and teachers

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Prize of volunteerism: Mayvel Aquino (holding the plaque), with DSWD Secretary Bautista and DSWD Field Office XII staff, accepts the award for being Best Volunteer Group of PANATA Ko Awards – Salamat Po Category.

# Winning support for the BAYANIHAN SPIRIT

**ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat** - Before the sun's powerful rays flood over the landscape, making way for a new day in the beautiful farming village of Sampao, Mayvel Aquino, 45, and her co-volunteers have completely prepared the needs of their children before going to school.

**G**arbed with their construction helmets, they hurried their way off to the village proper for the construction of the satellite market, where Mayvel serves as chairperson of project implementation.

The absence of a local market in Sampao leave villagers with no choice but to spend P60, the two-way fare to reach the town's central market to buy household needs especially for food, fish, rice and other necessities.

For mothers like Mayvel, establishing an accessible market in the village will make a lot of difference in terms of saving time and money.



In close coordination with barangay local government unit, serves as a watchdog of government programs and services.

### **An empowered community**

In the past, Mayvel, together with other volunteers in the village played an important role in the implementation of various Kalahi-CIDSS projects. Their synergized efforts resulted the approval and prioritization of a number of projects in Sampao.

In 2014, the volunteers proposed the construction of a satellite market. It was approved and funded under DSWD Kalahi-CIDSS Program amounting to P1.97 million benefiting a total of 442 households in Sampao.

The village also established a day care center rehabilitation project amounting to P500,000 benefiting some 1,391 residents in the area.

In 2016, Mayvel and village volunteers led the subproject management team for the construction of an academic and social hub amounting to P1.33 million benefiting 451 households in Sampao.

In 2017, the group also led the implementation of P1.5 million construction of drainage line canal benefiting 442 households in the barangay.

### **Rekindling bayanihan**

In 2016, Mayvel formally organized a group of volunteers in the village dubbed as United Volunteers for Community Progress (UVCP).

Established as a partner of local development initiatives in Barangay Sampao, the group is composed of Kalahi-CIDSS community volunteers since 2011. They represent various sectors in the village united by three common goals, to help improve the well-being of villagers, encourage the participation of various sectors in development programs, and improve the delivery of coordinated social services.

The organization is both a DSWD and LGU partner in designing citizen monitoring initiatives, to empower and foster active citizenship at community levels, and build partnerships between citizens and the government in the practice of social accountability.

The group has an important role in providing a platform for coordination, collaboration and cooperation between community residents and the LGU to deliver basic social services and implement development initiatives with transparency and accountability.

Institutionalizing a community-driven development approach, UVCP has initiated various projects and initiatives for the residents of Sampao in Isulan. UVCP has so far accessed a total of P5.30 million funds and successfully implemented these projects through volunteerism.

UVCP helped manage project execution and promoted the sustainability of the projects completed in Barangay Sampao.

Serving as hub of community needs, the Kalahi-CIDSS Satellite Market managed by United Volunteers for Community Progress, has been of great help to villagers of Sampao.



- The Sampao Satellite Market is one of the most unique mechanisms for sustainability in Region XII. It serves as a benchmark for other projects in the region because a certain percentage of its annual income goes to social responsibility projects and initiatives, particularly social services.

From its annual income, they have agreed to allocate P50,000 to fund proposed projects of the surrounding purok. Each purok is given a chance to present its project through an inter-purok forum. Projects are approved without intervention by politicians or elected officials.

For 2019, some of the projects funded through the annual income of the satellite market include the honorarium of a teacher in Bonita Elementary School, school fencing, procurement of water dispensers and monobloc chairs.

### Community Initiative

UVCP has initiated a MAKABAKA or May Kapansanan Bantay Kalikasan Project, involving persons with disabilities (PWD) in Sampao to become partners in environmental protection.

A total of 46 PWD members are actively involved in the project. They have received training on solid waste management, clean up drive, waste segregation and other worthy community endeavours.

The UVCP also sponsors the education of poor but deserving students of Sampao in elementary, high school and college in partnership with Overseas Filipinos of the barangay. The group conducts a tree planting activity to commemorate the birthday of each member.

### Community involvement

Attendance and participation of the residents in barangay assemblies is an indication that they are interested to know the development efforts being undertaken by the community. The UVCP endeavors to make Sampao development activities well participated to eliminate elite capture in decision-making in local governance.

The UVCP understands that the empowerment of people through participation in community activities is a human capital investment, of equal

importance to the success of every project in the community. The group is considered the main driver of the high rate of community participation in the municipality.

For every project, the villagers are involved, given access to and control of development decisions and resources. They have mobilized their capacity to analyze their own need, manage resources and find appropriate interventions. In the process, people have developed a strong sense of ownership to the development of their village.

The UVCP teaches that transparency is not just informing the community about the status of every project. It also means making people understand the decision-making process. The group also emphasizes that everyone is accountable and responsible for every action that affects their association and their projects.

Transparency, according to Mayvel Aquino, President of UVCP is an obligation to share information to the citizens. She maintains the value of being transparent in every transaction. She believes that an informed community is able to assess the operation of the project and prevent corruption.

The UVCP helps ensure that there is a mechanism to be open through a clear

disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions which allows good and just regulations.

### **Volunteerism wins**

It is no wonder why UVCP has been chosen as the 2017 Regional Winner of Bayani Ka! Awards for Best Sustained Community Group. Given by the DSWD, this award recognizes outstanding community volunteer organizations such as the UVCP in nation building.

On February 15, 2019, Mayvel woke up early not to monitor projects of their barangay but to travel more than 1,600 kilometers from their village to Manila, the country's capital to receive a national award.

This time, the UVCP was recognized by DSWD at the Pagkilala sa Natatanging Kontribusyon sa Bayan (PaNata Ko sa Bayan) Awards-Salamat Po Awards for Best Volunteer Group. Indeed, UVCP's contributions to DSWD programs, community volunteerism and on-going advocacy for community-driven development is a model worthy of emulation nationwide.

UVCP members regularly monitor all community projects for sustainability of its operations and maintenance.



# EMPOWERING early childhood centers and teachers

**POLOMOLOK, South Cotabato** - They say parents are a child's first teacher, while a day care teacher says, "We give children their first experience of the learning environment to help them succeed in their early learning years."

Five days a week, from Monday to Friday, Mary Grace Pido, 40 years old, would spend her time with her 51 pupils in San Miguel Day Care Center in Polomolok, South Cotabato.

Growing up as the only child, she knew she wanted to be a teacher as an adult. She had always liked being around children.

She remembered when she was 8 years old, she would gather the young kids in their area and would demonstrate to them the alphabets and numbers using the back portion of a used illustration board that she once used in one of her projects in school.

"Wish ko na talaga ang magkaroon ng maliit na kapatid. At doon ko nakita sa mga bata ang longing na yun (I've been longing to have siblings. With

them, I was able to fulfill my deepest longing)," she said in an interview.

Although she never had younger siblings, she decided to put her frustrations behind and set her sights to become an early childhood teacher.

In 1995, she graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. But she didn't stop there. She also earned units in education to hone her skills in teaching.

"Dumating yung point na gusto kong hasain pa ang sarili ko sa pagtuturo kaya't kahit medyo huli na sa edad, tinuloy ko ang pag-earn ng units kasi pangarap ko 'to (I realized that I need to improve myself more in teaching that's why I decided to continue learning)," said Mary Grace.

*Janelle Lubaton, a graduate of the day care center taught by Mary Grace proudly displays the ribbons and certificates she earned from her kindergarten years.*

*Mary Grace introduces primary colors to the children in San Miguel Day Care Center in Polomolok, South Cotabato.*





Today, she is no longer a frustrated ate. Since 2002, she has been teaching pre-school children just like she dreamed years ago.

### Pursuing your passion

Living her dream of being an early childhood teacher does not exempt her from experiencing difficult days at work.

“Yung mga bata hindi mo hawak ang kanilang ugali. May iba nag tatantrums, so ang ginagawa ko lang, kung saan sila pwede e handle, may ipinapagawa ako sa kanila na doon lang sila (You cannot control the attitude of these young kids, they will have tantrums. When that happens, I give them an activity and I would let them do what they want),” she lamented.

Looking at the bright side, she also revealed that the rewards of being a teacher continues to inspire her to get up every morning.

“Malipay ko kung naay mu-adto na parent dri ug muingun - ma’am, akong anak achiever sa elementary school (It makes me proud every time a parent would come to me and say that their children are doing well in elementary schools),” she said.

Mary Grace is among the 78 Day Care workers in the municipality working full-time in the 23 barangays of Polomolok.

As the municipality focuses on developing their children, teachers like Grace were also empowered and protected.

These teachers received an honorarium and incentives as well as uniform allowance. Consequently, the LGU through the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWD), provides capacity building training to sharpen the knowledge and skills of the teachers to keep them up-to-date with the latest technologies in relation to Early Childhood Care and Development.

### Receiving LGU support

The local government is committed in using existing resources and programs to maximize its capacity to respond to the needs of the children. With our commitment – not a single child will be left behind.

The town Mayor Honey Lumayag-Matti shared her commitment to support day care centers and workers like Grace. The mayor had in fact committed 10% of the town’s total IRA or Internal Revenue Allotment to SWD Programs and Services. This is equivalent to P41,383,741 according to the data presented by Carlie Garcia, the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office Head.

This includes the P5 million budget in adding and improving Day Care Service Programs.

“Mataas ang vision ng Polomolok na kung mapagtutuunan ng pansin ang mga karapatan ng mga bata, magiging productive sila later on (The LGU of Polomolok envisioned that if children’s rights are properly given attention they will be productive in the future),” said Mayor Matti.



**Mayor Honey Lumayag-Matti, has committed to put all of her efforts in supporting day care centers and workers like Grace.**



Photo Courtesy: Local chief executives and representatives of LGU received their plaque of recognition last November 28, 2019 at Malacañang Palace.

Garcia added that it helps to have a local chief executive who is hands-on in executing their programs. Aside from having close communication with the MSWD, the mayor herself would randomly visit day care centers and sit-in. It is her way of randomly checking teachers' performance.

Moreover, Polomolok also has a proactive civil society composed of various cooperatives and non-government agencies. These partners also provide assistance to children in the form of classroom materials such as chairs, bags, school supplies and other needs.

#### **Towards a first-class human capital**

Scholarships for further education have been provided to sustain the growth and development of children in Polomolok's children. The LGU prioritizes students who are in need and lack the resources to enroll in high school and college institutions across the region.

Per official data release by MSWDO, there were a total of 847 scholars in the year 2018 consisting of 42 athletes, 40 college students, 725 high school students, 180 students and 40 UP School of Science students.

November 28, 2019, was a historic and rewarding day for the LGU of Polomolok. The LGU received a Presidential Award as

one of the most Outstanding Child-Friendly Municipalities in the country.

The award is given to local municipalities that frontline the promotion of children's rights to survival, development, protection, and participation as well as ensuring child-friendly governance in accordance to Child Welfare Council standard.

A first-class municipality in the region, Polomolok garnered the highest score after the evaluation by the National Awards Committee in July 2019 in accordance to the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA) conducted by the Regional Inter-Agency Monitoring Task Force.

The municipality received the plaque of recognition and a cash prize of P100, 000 from the presidential fund for children's welfare.

The cash prize was downloaded directly to the funds of the LGU appropriated for the distribution of school supplies in the public schools of Polomolok.

Emboldened by the recognition, the LGU of Polomolok strengthened its commitment in promoting and protecting children's rights and needs.

The City of Cotabato, also in Region XII was likewise short-listed as a Child Friendly City in the independent city category.

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