

HIGHLIGHTS OF ASSESSMENT-BASED NATIONAL DIALOGUE (ABND) ISLAND-WIDE CONSULTATIONS LUZON CLUSTER

March 30-31, 2015

5400 Manuel A. Roxas Highway, Clark Freeport Zone, Angeles City, Pampanga

I. ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

As part of series of consultations, the Assessment Based-National Dialogue (ABND) Island-wide Luzon Consultation was held last March 30-31, 2015 at Widus Hotel, Clark, Pampanga. It was attended by seventy three (73) participants from Social Security System (SSS), Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC), Office of Social Security Commissioner Ibarra Malonzo, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and their regional counterparts from Luzon, Technical Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) RO III, Regional Tri-Partite Industrial Peace Councils, sectoral representatives from National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), and non-government agencies and organizations such as Federation of Free Workers (FFW), Social Watch Philippines, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF) and International Labor Organization (ILO) .

II. OBJECTIVES

As part of the undertakings of Human Development and Poverty Reduction (HDPR) Cluster to accelerate poverty reduction measures through strengthening the social protection for poor, vulnerable and marginalized sector, the conduct of ABND was approved towards establishing a minimum set of guarantees of Social Protection Floor in the Philippines.

After the inventory of present social protection policies and programs in the Philippines through bilateral and multi-lateral meeting with concerned agencies at the national level, Island-wide Consultations aim to validate and generate comments and recommendations on the social protection policy and program gaps from stakeholders at the regional/local level such as the representative from Regional Development Councils, Regional Tri-partite Industrial Peace Councils, employers' group, workers' group, and other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

III. HIGHLIGHTS

- Director Ahmma Charisma Lobrin-Satumba of DOLE-Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC) led the facilitation of the program as the moderator. Ms. Marinelle Marcos of DOLE-Planning Service led the invocation and was followed by the singing of Philippine National Anthem.
- DOLE Regional Office No. III Director Ana C. Dione gave her welcome remarks to formally start the activity. She acknowledged the organizers for selecting Clark, Pampanga as the venue for the consultations. She reminded the body to be thankful for being part of the crafting the national social protection floor and encouraged everyone's participation as they make a history for the social protection of the Philippines.
- DOLE Undersecretary Reydeluz D. Conferido, who has the oversight function for Luzon cluster, delivered his opening message. With his sharing of the success stories of notable Asian economies which mentioned Singapore's transformation from a simple fishing port into a highly

developed country and Taiwan's lead model of health care system in the world, he encouraged the participants that the Philippines can also aim high and eventually achieve its own milestones towards our development. He pointed out that the social protection programs and schemes must be responsive to the changes in the economic and environmental realities wherein the poor and marginalized are greatly affected.

Moreover, he reminded the participants to be realistic and widen their perspective to see certain gaps and opportunities to realize our aim of expanding the coverage and developing the benefits of our social protection.

- DOLE Undersecretary Ciriaco A. Lagunzad III delivered his keynote message. He emphasized the need for inclusive development. He noted that the remarkable economic growth of the Philippines in recent years has to be experienced by the greatest number of the citizens which to bring together, equalize, and widen opportunities, social mobility, tolerance for diversity, and implement good governance. As one response, social protection takes an important role to prevent and alleviate poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion.

He said that with the observable gaps at hand, there is a need to harness and expand the coverage of social protection guarantees to larger number of people and all the excluded from social safety nets. This is in particular to those individuals, mainly in the informal economy, who were exposed to risks and vulnerabilities brought by increasing number of external and internal migrants, surplus of labor in rural areas, occurrence of natural or man-made catastrophes and economic downturns that will prevent them from falling further down to monetary and chronic poverty.

He also gave a brief overview of the steps which the ABND will take to determine the effectiveness of the social protection strategy in a country from various viewpoints of stakeholders. He emphasized that the exercise applies a participatory approach, wherein all tripartite partners are engage on developing a social protection action plan which discusses gaps in policy and program implementation, and likewise provides corresponding recommendations.

He ended his message by sharing the recent round of bilateral negotiations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which the agenda centered on the social protection agenda of Filipino domestic workers. Lastly, he stressed the need to guarantee the proper documentation of inputs in respective to the realities of the sectors that the participants represent and continuously strengthen the areas of partnerships in crafting strategies to transition the vulnerable and marginalized and those formerly excluded to the formal economy.

- Ms. Girlie J. Casimiro, Chief EDS of NEDA-Social Development Staff, gave an overview on social protection in Philippine context. She gave a walkthrough to the concepts and definitions related to the Philippine social protection. Guided by the Enhanced Social Protection Operational Framework Strategy, there are the four components, namely: (1) Social Insurance, (2) Social Welfare, (3) Labor Market Interventions, and (4) Social Safety Nets. She referred several existing social protection programs and schemes as respective examples for each component.

Furthermore, she gave a brief account on the initiatives done and taken by the Philippine government since the Arroyo administration which includes the following: (1) issuance of Administrative Orders 232 and 232-A, strengthening social welfare programs, (2) Development Academy of the Philippines' (DAP) study entitled "Review and Strengthening National Social Protection and Welfare Program" which recommends to enhance and harmonize government programs, (3) Institutionalized NEDA-Social Development Committee (SDC) Sub-committees on

Social Protection and Informal Sector. She further discussed the operating structure wherein various national government agencies such as DBM, DOLE, PSA, NCIP, among others, converge with one another. It was also reiterated that it has its counterpart at the regional level.

To further comprehend the operational framework and strategy, the following terms related to social protection was explained namely, (1) poverty, (2) risks, (3) shocks, and (4) vulnerabilities. Lastly, the strategies were introduced to fully realize an effective and responsive social protection which includes, (1) scaling up of community driven development which runs a bottom-up approach, (2) convergence in the delivery of core responses to avoid duplication of government services, (3) adaptive capacities at all levels of implementation to ensure that all implementers from the national and local levels can deliver, (4) institutionalize monitoring and evaluation system. Among the identified challenges were the following: (1) lack of targeting mechanism that identifies the vulnerable as well as the risk and shocks that they confront, (2) strengthen the implementation of disaster risk reduction strategy at social protection services at the local level, (3) limited number of poor and vulnerable beneficiaries despite of the existing programs, and (4) increasing vulnerability of OFWs and migrant workers due to armed conflicts and economic downturns.

Finally, she shared the ongoing initiatives of the Philippines government pertaining to social protection. DSWD has developed social protection handbook. The conduct of ABND and CODI were being done. All these initiatives will be part in the crafting of the five-year social protection action plan.

- Ms. Loveleen De, Social Protection Consultant from the ILO, presented the ILO perspective of social protection as a key response to financial risks and losses, natural emergencies and contingencies such as maternity, disability, old-age, economic crisis, armed conflicts and among others, which prevents people to fall further to poverty line. Based on ILO definition, it has four set of guarantees namely, (1) essential health-care, (2) income security for children, (3) working age people, and (4) elderly. She reiterated the following points: First, social protection floor must be established to ensure that everyone should have access to minimum level of social protection. Second, social protection floor must be nationally defined depending on their specific situation, needs, resources and values. Lastly, there is no one size fits all approach in designing, defining and implementing social protection floor.

The ABND serves as a mechanism to define and design a nationally defined social protection floor. Its concepts and process were summarized into three basic steps: (1) draw an assessment matrix which is an inventory of existing social protection programs and schemes to identify gaps in the policy and implements as well as its corresponding recommendations, (2) estimate the cost for implementing the recommendations as against country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to determine if it's feasible for the government to implement, and (3) finalize and launch the national social protection floor. She explained the different sections of the assessment matrix and how will be the parameters for the cost estimation will be determined.

At the ASEAN regional level, the conduct of ABND is ongoing for Myanmar, Laos PDR and the Philippines, while the Malaysia is set to follow. ILO is also preparing for a cross-country report on ABND.

She enumerated the strengths and limitations of ABND exercise. Among the strengths cited were: (1) it uses a holistic and coordinative approach which involves all relevant stakeholders in a given country to define the national SPF, and (2) engaging stakeholders into a national dialogue for the SPF to identify issues and give recommendations, and estimate its affordability. On the other

hand, the limitation is that the proposed recommendations, in particular for starting a new scheme, are scrutinized at the system level thus require more detailed and actuarial studies given the generality of the ABND.

- Ms. Ma. Lourdes Macapanpan of ILO presented the ABND process. She reiterated the three major outputs expected in the ABND, which was discussed earlier by Ms. Loveleen De. Moreover, she presented the important milestones achieved pertaining to social protection initiatives in the Philippines. Among mentioned was the pilot launching of National Convergence Program for the Workers in the Informal Sector, wherein various government agencies committed to mainstream its programs towards the workers in the sector.

Moreover, she shared a brief history of how the conduct of ABND was spearheaded in the Philippine population last 2014. Relative to its facilitation, an inter-agency core-group was formed to provide initial data for the assessment matrix, planning for the meetings, workshops and activities, and endorsement of proposed recommendation. DOLE act as the core group chair while NEDA as co-chair.

She ended by presenting the activity plan for the upcoming ABND related activities and encouraged the participants to visit the ABND web workspace exclusive for the Philippine exercise.

- After the presentations, the moderator opened the floor for comments and question. The following are the highlights of the discussion:
 - Mr. Luis Reynoso of DOLE-BWSC mentioned about his observations on the non-inclusion of PAG-IBIG in this consultation, Director Satumba however assured Mr. Reynoso that PAG-IBIG will be invited in the Mindanao Consultation and In the National Validation. In addition, Mr. Reynoso also suggested, since the Informal sector is very broad in coverage, matters of advocacy of the concerned agencies with regards to their social protection services must be strengthen.
 - Mr. Abner Manlapaz, the representative from Social Watch Philippines, asked if only the working age people are considered under vulnerability risk, how about for other sectors on children and old age. Ms. Casimiro from NEDA responded that the concerns of PWDs same as other vulnerable groups such as IPs are crosscutting.
 - According to Dr. Nestor Asuncion of RTIPC NCR Labor, some parents for employed-children below 60 without work who are vulnerable do not have PHIC coverage and Dr. Pargas of PHIC said that through the NHTS, all individuals identified by PHIC are covered already including the vulnerable and poor non-working individuals below 60 except for informal economy. He added that the individuals who are not in the NHTS data will be covered under the sponsorship of LGU.
 - Ms. Joy Bacon of NAPC BSCAS asked what will happen to this exercise if the government will declare non-allocation of syntax on SPFs. However, Atty. Alan Ortiz of Office of SSC Commissioner Ibarra Malonzo said that there have been proposals to national government for this activity and we have the basic assumption to have rooms for the Social Protection Programs. Undersecretary Lagunzad also added that it doesn't mean we would stop if we still do not know all the answers right now and that it will give legitimacy since this activity will be generated from the tripartite community to attract political support and national assistance. Each item requires fundamental changes. He also encouraged everyone not to be afraid to changes and

to help each and every one until we could have a strong foundation for the social protection for the Filipino people.

- Mr. Salvador Dimain, sectoral representative from indigenous people, inquired about the non-inclusion of NCIP in the core group. Director Satumba responded that we are serious in ensuring that all sectors are all represented in this activity thus a subcommittee in SP is institutionalized and NCIP is part of the group. The core group presented earlier is for the ABND exercise only. She also assured the representation of NCIP at the National Validation.
 - Mr. Edwin Baddal of DILG CAR asked if there is an estimate of how much of the GDP was allocated for SP programs if this is a mechanism to make vulnerable sector feel the growth in economy. Director Capones of NEDA replied that social services may be determined but social protection is cross-cutting.
 - Mr. Aldwin Reyes of DILG said that this activity might be an exercise of futility if the next administration will be indifferent to the issue identified here. He added, if we present costing to legislators, NEDA should provide costing of programs which however if affirmed by Director Capones that NEDA can compute the budget allocated on major SP programs like 4Ps for 2014. If need be expanded, how much will be needed with the objective of advocating to the next administration.
- Employee’s Compensation Commission (ECC) Executive Director Stella Z. Banawis gave a walkthrough of the social protection programs and schemes identified in the assessment matrices. In general, the discussion moved deliberately by pointing on the following: (1) overview of the programs/schemes, (2) identified policy and implementation gaps and (3) their corresponding recommendations.
 - The moderator discussed the mechanics of the workshop consultations. Four groups shall be formed namely: (1) SPF1 (Health Care), (2) SPF2 (Children) and Cross Cutting Gaps, (3) SPF3 Labor Market Intervention, (4) SPF3 – Social Welfare and Social Safety Net, (5) SPF3 – Social Insurance, (6) SPF3 – OFWs and Migrant Workers, and (7) SPF4 – Income Security for the Elderly and Cross Cutting Gaps. Participants were given the freedom to choose which group they want to join in.

IV. SUMMARY OF WORKGROUP DISCUSSION

GROUP 1 - SPF 1 (HEALTH CARE)	
Facilitator	: Dr. Israel Francis Pargas, PHIC
Members	: Dr. Juliana Reyes, DOH Ms. Angelica Umoquit, NEDA RO II Ms. Beltsezara Garcia, NEDA RO IV-B Mr. Godfrey Domingo, RTIPC-NCR (Labor) Mr. Aldwin Reyes, DILG
Secretariat	: Ms. Marinelle Marcos, DOLE-PS

The group conferred on the social protection schemes enlisted under SPF 1 guarantee on Essential Health Care. Dr. Israel Francis Pargas of PHIC facilitated the discussion and Ms. Marinelle Marcos documented the proceedings. It centered on PHILHEALTH coverage on informal sector, accessibility to and quality of services of government health facilities, and the proposed establishment of veteran hospitals outside the Metro Manila area. Below are the highlights of the workgroup discussion:

- On the issue that some vital health care services are not part of the PHILHEALTH package, the group agreed to recommend the inclusion of psycho-therapy, drug rehabilitation and other mental health illnesses. It was clarified that psychiatric illnesses, particularly the acute cases, are already covered. Moreover, MRI, CT scan, mammography (OPD diagnostics) are covered given that the patient is confined.
- On the issue of limited coverage of informal sector workers, the group concurred with the existing recommendations and added the following: (1) Expand the age range of the qualified dependents (parents less than 60 yrs. Old) of employed members through legislative amendment, and (2) Include in the menu of BUB coverage of low income informal sector not covered by the NHTS.
- The group did not fully subscribe with the recommendation to establish regional veterans' medical center in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao respectively. In lieu of the said recommendation, it was agreed to recommend of providing extensions in government hospitals wherein wing/section of government retained hospitals and/or military hospitals will be dedicated for the veterans (prioritization of veterans). In order to do so, a Memorandum of Agreement is to be signed between the veterans and all government hospitals for the payment of expenses incurred by veterans for hospitalization.
- On the issue that health facilities are not accessible resulting to the inability of some households to comply with the conditionalities provided by the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), the group concurred with the recommendation to set-up mobile health facilities. DOH informed that they have ongoing programs to improve facilities through the Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP), and to assign health professionals to Local Government Units (LGUs).

GROUP 2 - SPF 2 (INCOME SECURITY FOR CHILDREN) AND CROSS-CUTTING GAPS	
Facilitator	: Ms. Girlie J. Casimiro, NEDA-SDS
Members	: Mr. Robinson G. Maac, DILG RO-IVA Ms. Miramel Garcia-Laxa, DSWD-PSB Mr. Cesar Hawak, NAPC Fisher-folk Ms. Rose Manota, TIPC RO-III Ms. Maribeth Casin, DOLE-BWSC Mr. Abner Manlapaz, Social Watch Ms. Rosella Placido, DILG-RO III Ms. Krista Nina Datu, DILG-RO III Mr. Noe R. Racho, NEDA RO-V Mr. Allan M. Del Rosario, TIPC RO-III Mr. Noel Mallari, TIPC RO-III Mr. Augusto Rodriguez, UNICEF
Secretariat	: Ms. Marie Elaine Ceralde, NEDA-SDS

The group conferred on the social protection schemes enlisted under SPF 2 guarantee on the Income Security for Children and Cross Cutting Gaps. Ms. Girlie Casimiro of NEDA facilitated the discussion and Ms. Marie Elaine Ceralde documented the proceedings. 4Ps implementation on child beneficiaries and the feeding program centered the discussion on SPF-2 while the targeting mechanism, unified database and information dissemination

were highly discussed as for cross-cutting gaps. Below are the highlights of the workshop discussion:

- On the issue of the lack of provision of fortified or nutritious food for 4Ps beneficiaries, it was suggested to consult with DOH if the recommendation on including high-impact nutrition specific preventive interventions is still a policy gap, and whether there is an existing policy on iron-folic acid supplementation.
- On the issue that child labor should not be allowed for 4Ps children, the group recommended to include child protection among the conditionality. To support this, the following were suggested: (1) intensify the Family Development Session (FDS) on child labor, and (2) Include child labor incidences in the Profiling of 4Ps beneficiaries.
- DSWD clarified that nutrition education modules for FDS were already developed. However, the issue rest on the delivery mechanism i.e. BNS/BHW to deliver FDS. The group recommended to asses FDS modules if it meet the international standards on rights (inclusive).
- On the recommendations for the supplementary feeding programs, the group made agreements, which are follows: consult with DOH regarding the possible health implication of extending the one hundred twenty (120) feeding days, enhance parent education on nutrition, among others.
- It was suggested that NHTS-PR should not be the sole targeting mechanism because "all children in need" should be included. Furthermore, the group recommend for the provision of PWD-friendly anthropometric tools by the DOH to ensure effective monitoring of the program.
- On the issue of the partial implementation of Foster Care Act at the LGU level, the group agreed on the recommendations, which are as follows: (1) Strengthen Local Council for the Protection of Children and make it functional, (2) Intensify IACs for the Seal of Child Friendly Local Good Governance, and Include all programs and policies on children based on NPAC (including child survival, protection, development and participation rights).
- The need to conduct awareness building and training for LGUs to improve delivery of benefits was raised during the discussion. Although there are trainings being conducted, the issue rests on the quality of LCE's participation. Among the recommendations to increase their participation are (1) LCEs should be accompanied by local function heads during trainings, (2) Provide incentives such as certificates, (3) Include accessibility law, and intensify social services/ development issues, special laws and policies in the training modules.

GROUP 3 - SPF 3 (LABOR MARKET INTERVENTIONS)		
Facilitator	:	Mr. Antonio Asper, FFW
Members	:	Director Grace Y. Ursua, DOLE RO I Mr. Nomer M. Pascual, TESDA RO III Mr. Luis Daniel Dela Cruz, DSWD Ms. Stella Maris P. Bañares, DOLE Mr. Antonio Garcia Jr., RTIPC Mr. Ramilo Sususco, RTIPC RO IV-B Mr. Freynon N. Perez, NEDO RO I

	Mr. Engel C. Lasang, RTIPC
Secretariat	: Mr. Cyrus Policarpio, DOLE-BWSC

The group discussed the labor market interventions programs enlisted under SPF 3 guarantee on Income Security for the Working Age People. Mr. Antonio Asper, FFW, act as moderator and Mr. Cyrus Policarpio of DOLE-BWSC documented the proceedings. The discussion focused on the issue of sustainability of government livelihood programs, accessibility of PHILJOBNET, Public Employment Services Offices, and TESDA Programs.

- The group perceived that the livelihood programs of the government agencies are mostly not sustainable due to the lack of access to markets and assurance to meet the economies of scale. In line with this, it was recommended for the implementers to capture institutional markets such as linking market association with government-controlled markets and promote community participation as a negotiated procurement modality. Specifically on the DOLE Livelihood Program, the group agreed to put on recommendation the review the need for the accredited co-partner to simplify the requirements as prescribed under COA.
- The significant role of PESO was recognized by the group. Thus, it was agreed that the recommendation to institutionalize PESO at the LGU level be retained. Moreover, the group suggested to implement a framework of municipal inter-agency between DSWD, DOLE, DA and DOH to improve the facilitation of national government programs at the local level.
- On the TESDA programs, among the agreed recommendations were (1) dual training system as a modality, (2) Improve Database system to make it more transparent and informative, and (3) provide amendment to the existing law on the apprenticeship program.
- The group recognized the need to fully utilize the PHILJOBNET as a comprehensive online portal. Thus, it was agreed that PHILJOBNET be reviewed in comparison with other leading private sector job portal such as Jobstreet and JobsDB which will look for possible niche for the said job portal.

GROUP 4 - SPF 3 (SOCIAL INSURANCE)	
Facilitator	: Exec. Dir. Stella Z. Banawis, ECC
Members	: Ms. Yolanda L. Bugarin, BWSC Ms. Ma. Nympha M. Ragel, SSS Ms. Loida P. Rivera, NAPC-Farmer Ms. Divina Hope V. Vallejo, NEDA 3 Ms. Lianelle G. Tandoc, NEDA 3 Ms. Luis L. Arueza, NAPC-Victims of disaster & calamities Mr. Gelo Tolentino, FFW-RMPI Mr. Donald Dayo, NAPC-Youth/Student
Secretariat	: Ms. Riza Mae B. Daguplo, ECC

The group conferred on the social insurance programs and schemes identified under SPF 3 guarantee which focuses on Income Security for the Working Age People. Executive Director Stella Banawis of ECC acted as the moderator and Ms. Riza Mae Daguplo of ECC documented the proceedings of discussions. Social Security System (SSS) was the main highlight of discussion. Also discussed were the feasibility of creating an unemployment insurance, expansion of benefits covered by the Agricultural Insurance Program and social security coverage for contractual personnel in the government service. The following were the highlights of the group workshop:

- On the issue that unemployment insurance is not provided in the country, the group recommended the possibility of introducing an unemployment insurance scheme related to job search assistance and skills and entrepreneurial trainings. Importantly, the group emphasized the need to draw adequate resources to support the program.
- The group recognized the gap on the limited coverage of land-based OFWs covered under SSS due to the existing policy of voluntary membership. Among the agreements raised by the group are (1) Philippine government to pursue bilateral agreements on possibility to cover OFWs in the receiving country, (2) Intensify awareness campaign on social security as an investment among OFWs, and (3) make SSS contributions mandatory for Land-based OFWs by amending the social security law.
- On the issue that some SSS benefit amounts are insufficient because of, among other reasons, low contribution rates and low ceiling on the monthly salary credit, it was recommended to develop higher benefit programs with higher premiums under SSS.
- The concerns of informal sector members was raised during the meeting. On the issue that they cannot pay premiums on a regular basis, the group concurred with the recommendation to partly subsidize social insurance premiums for the informal sector by the national government. On the other hand, the group recommended to expand innovative membership and premium collection schemes like the AlkanSSSy, intensify information campaign. Moreover, it was also raised that the registration were observed to be tedious and costly compliance to requirements for certain sectors. As recommendation, LGU and NSO should facilitate in securing documentary requirements to support application for SSS claims in response to the low coverage among the said sector.
- The issue that implementation of EC programme under SSS, GSIS and ECC is fragmented which leads to disparities in the benefits for public and private sector workers was raised. The group recommended to study the feasibility of a single agency in charge of implementing and managing the entire EC programs and benchmark the ECP program with other countries.
- Regarding the issue that some government personnel under MOA, COS, JO, and barangay officials do not have social security coverage, it was recommended to (1) conduct studies to explore coverage under GSIS and (2) integrate social insurance in the worker's salary and facilitate deductions and eventual remittance to GSIS.
- On Social Amelioration Program (SAP), the group recognized the need for further study of appropriate amount of benefits under the maternity and death benefit programs and other types of benefits to be provided. On the issue of delayed payments, it was recommended to reduce process cycle from 15 days to 5 days by configuring the system of claims processing and payment and explore for alternative ways/system which can guarantee the timely receipt of benefits (e.g. remittance centers).

GROUP 5 - SPF 3 (Social Welfare and Social Safety Nets)		
Facilitator	:	Dir. Ahmma Charisma Lobrin-Satumba, DOLE-BWSC
Members	:	Dir. Ma. Zenaida A. Campita, DOLE RO-IVA Dir. Teodoro Delson, DOLE RO-IVB Dir. Nathaniel Lacambra, DOLE RO-V ARD Nepomuceno Leano, DOLE NCR

	ARD Erwin N. Aquino, DOLE CAR Ms. Gloria Madayag, NAPC Mr. Rogelio Tarruela, TIPC NCR Dr. Nestor Asuncion, TIPC NCR Mr. Salvador Poserio, TIPC RO I Ms. Leilani Babista, NAPC Cooperative Ms. Maria Luisa T. Ronquillo, NAPC PWDs Mr. Englebert C. Lasang, TIPC RO IVA Mr. Eufemio Cacabelos, RTIPC Ms. Ofelia Bacani, RTIPC RO-II Ms. Yolanda Bugarin, DOLE-BWSC Mr. Alce C. Quitaig, Social Watch Ms. Joven Sales
Secretariat	: Mr. Francis Balitaan, DOLE-PS

The group conferred on the existing social welfare and social safety nets programs identified under SPF 3 guarantee on the Income Security for the Working Age People. Director Ahmma Charisma Lobrin-Satumba of DOLE-BWSC facilitated the group discussion and Mr. Francis Balitaan of DOLE-Planning Service documented the proceedings of discussions. Among the programs that were discussed are DSWD's Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan - Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services - National Community Driven Development Program (KALAHY-CIDSS-NCDDP) and Cash for Work Program, DOLE's Tulong Panghanapbuhay Para Sa Ating Mga Disadvantaged Workers Program (TUPAD), and Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM). The following were the highlights of the group workshop:

- DSWD gave an overview of the KALAHY program. With the observation that similar programs exist at the community level, the group raised the issue of complementation of such programs being implemented by different NGAs. This also came up in connection with the introduction of the Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB) Program under the current administration. In response, the group recommended that beneficiaries of the KALAHY-CIDSS-NCDDP be excluded already from the identification of beneficiaries of the same type of services sourced from the BUB. In ensuring that convergence is observed at the community level for the different types of programs of the NGAs, the recommendation is for each implementing agency with programs at the community level to take the lead in coordinating programs focusing on particular dimensions of development.
- On the question of how responsive the program in times of calamities and disasters, the DSWD said that it follows a more simplified procedure of program delivery in calamity-stricken areas. However, they are still experiencing common stringent requirements set by the COA such as the LGU's declaration of state of calamity in the affected area, a complete program of work, among others, which impedes the responsiveness of the government's programs
- The group observed the need for institutional arrangement to safeguard the programs being politicized. In response, it was recommended to strengthen the use of the NHTS as targeting mechanism and to widen the dissemination of information with regard to the use of the redress system for curbing leakages caused by "political maneuvering", among other causes.
- The emergency employment programs of DSWD and DOLE were introduced and contrasted during the discussion. As for recommendations, the emergency employment programs have

to standardize the benefits to be received by ensuring the provision of the above. The DSWD agreed that these would be endorsed as part of the CFW's program implementation design.

- The group pointed out that this restriction may not entirely be practical as an area previously covered can be possibly struck with the same calamities such as typhoons, thereby necessitating again one's access to emergency employment. The immediate recommendation raised was for the DOLE to consider the revision of the TUPAD's guidelines to allow availment for more than once when the same beneficiaries are affected by another natural or man-made disaster.
- The question raised was how Community-based Employment Program (CBEP) could be re-framed as a safety net program since its enrolled programs are already targeted or placed in specific areas, In response (in order for this re-direction to be realized), the recommendation was to revisit or review the existing CBEP guidelines.

GROUP 6 - SPF 3 (OFWs and Migrant Workers)		
Facilitator	:	Dir. Maria Lourdes Reyes, OWWA RO3
Members	:	Assistant Secretary Ma. Gloria A. Tango, DOLE Ms. Consuelo Castañeda, DILG Mr. Donald Gawe, NEDA Mr. Melvin Caseda, NRCO Ms. Aubrey Fabian, NAPC-Labor/Migrant workers
Secretariat	:	Ms. Carol Puno, DOLE Ms. Via Lobrin, DOLE

The social protection programs for the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and other migrant workers were discussed by the workshop group. Director Maria Lourdes Reyes of OWWA facilitated the discussion and Ms. Carol Puno of Office of Undersecretary Lagunzad documented the proceedings. OWWA and NRCO programs were the main focus of the discussion. The following were the highlights of the group workshop:

- It was cited that OFWs have limited access or means to pay premiums/benefits to social security programs in the Philippines. In response, the group agreed to move forward the following recommendations: (1) review existing guidelines on mandatory membership to SSS/ PhilHealth/ Pag-Ibig specific to OFWs with goal of increasing the number of those covered by said programs, (2) explore the feasibility of the government to shoulder part of the employer's share to said benefits, (3) consult BSP on the possibility of providing OFWs with preferred rates on loans (interest rates) or discounts/ rebates for remittances sent.
- One of the concerns raised was whether the modules used for PDOS and PEOS are effective or not. Among the recommendations given was develop specific modules in PDOS and PEOS, which will zero in the concerns that OFWs may experience on-site, return, and reintegration program. In addition, it should not be limited to the workers but also require family members of OFWs to attend PDOS/PEOS as part of orientation.
- NAPC raised the possibility of adding an agenda on development of mechanism to protect undocumented Filipino migrants and likewise develop mechanism towards regularization.
- It was recognized that OFWs have peculiar/ specific issues and concerns. In response, NEDA suggested for the Regional Development Council to create a Committee on Migration and Development that will address OFW concerns at the regional level.

- It was raised that possibility of adding an agenda on development of mechanism to protect undocumented Filipino migrants and likewise develop mechanism towards regularization should be considered in bilateral agreements. It was added in the recommendation to expand government to government arrangement to ensure effective tracking and penalization of manning agencies (ex. FRAs) with violations.
- Despite aggressive campaigns, anti-illegal recruitment, human trafficking activities and other related issues such as placement fees were on the rise. It was recommend that POEA may explore the possibility of assigning and/or designating additional adjudicators who will process contract violations and related violations. Also, the areas of convergence among agencies and capacity building plan for members of the Philippines mission were recommended.

GROUP 7 - SPF 4 (Income Security for the Elderly) and Cross cutting Issues		
Facilitator	:	Atty. Alan Ortiz, SSC-Office of Commissioner Malonzo
Members	:	Director Erlinda Capones, NEDA-SDS Ms. Joy Bacon, NAPC-BSCAS Prof. Elmer Noriega, TIPC RO I Mr. Salvador Dimain, NAPC Indigenous People Ms. Toni Mendoza, DILG RO I Ms. Lucia Almeda, DSWD FO 4A
Secretariat	:	Ms. Coco Chanel Garcia, DOLE RO III/ECC REU

The SPF guarantee 4, which pertains to income security for the elderly, and cross cutting issues was discussed by this particular group. Atty Alan Ortiz of SSC-Office of Commissioner Malonzo moderated the discussion and Ms. Coco Chanel Garcia of ECC RO 3 documented the proceedings. Among the key issues discussed were: (1) benefits are inadequate to meet the needs of PWDs, in particular to the case of PWDs, (2) access of elderly to government services, and (3) possible increase of discount provision for basic goods. Below are the highlights of discussion:

- The group recognized benefits are not sufficient to meet the needs of the pensioners. Also, it was added that benefits for PWDs are not realistic due to higher cost of living. In response, the recommendation was to consider higher pension for indigent elderly especially the PWDs.
- On the issue that the social pension amount of P500 per month given under the Social Pension for the Indigent Senior Citizen is not sufficient for sustenance and buying medicines, the group recommended to augment budget allocation for social pension to enable the increase from P500 to P2,000 monthly pension for all people above 60 years.
- Regarding the provision special discount on basic goods for senior citizen, the key recommendations of the group were to expand the list of basic goods subject to discount and increase the discount on basic goods from 5% to 20%.
- It was raised that the some LGUs do not have any functioning coordinating and monitoring board which supposed to oversee the implementation of the elderly benefits. Since it was mandated under the Expanded Senior Citizen’s Act, the group recommended the activate Coordinating and Monitoring Board at the regional, provincial, city, and municipal levels.

- Regarding the development of a comprehensive, unified database for SP programs, it was recommended that concerned government agencies, with the cooperation of the basic sectors, to develop databases: (1) sex and age disaggregated, (2) workers in the informal sector, (3) IPs, (4) medical practitioners for the purpose of monitoring and verifying availment of senior citizens'/PWDs' discount on medicines.

V. HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESENTATION OF WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

Each working group has designated to present their respective outputs of discussion to the plenary. After each presentation, the floor was opened for comments, questions and clarifications. DOLE-Planning Service Director Adeline T. De Castro facilitated for this particular part of the activity. The following are the highlights of open forum after each presentation of group outputs:

GROUP 1 : SPF 1 (ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE)

- Mr. Aldwin Reyes of DILG presented the workshop output of the group.
- Social Watch Philippines added if other type of illnesses with medical related expenses such as epilepsy, among others, can be included in PHILHEALTH benefits. He also noted the need for capacity building for service providers on how to properly deal with clients.
- It was raised that DILG should ensure that LGUs are fully implementing the Magna Carta for Health Workers. However, DILG CAR clarified that it is not part of their mandate although they had issued a circular on this matter. The implementation rest on the capacity of respective LGUs. He added that the DOH should fund 4th to 6th class LGUs' implementation in order to ensure full implementation of the Magna Carta for Health Workers. In support, a representative from NAPC cited that 5th and 6th class municipalities are marginalized when it comes to funding allocation when they should be prioritized
- DOH said that they have a program called Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP) which aims to improve country's facilities. However, NAPC raised the present situation of rural areas where most municipal hospitals experience difficulty to sustain operation, and to some extent, not even have health centers and doctors in place. It was emphasized that all municipalities should have health facilities. DOH added further they have a program on temporary assignment of health professionals to LGUs, aside from HFEP. On addressing issues of poor municipalities, DSWD said that there are different convergence programs among NGAs e.g. Natural Community Driven Project.

NAPC inquired about the coverage of emancipated individuals who are 21 years old below and have their own children. In response, PHILHEALTH said that emancipated individuals are encouraged to get their own PHILHEALTH.

- PHILHEALTH made a suggestion for the core group to elevate the results of the activity to HDPR and merge with current efforts of the government and feedback actions to be taken to the stakeholders consulted at the ground.

**GROUP 2 : SPF 2 (INCOME SECURITY FOR CHILDREN) AND
CROSS CUTTING ISSUES**

- On sustainability of 4Ps program, Mr. Edwin Bustillos, NAPC sectoral representative for labor and migrant workers, noted that, in the long term, for sustainability, with the institutionalization, must also be linked to job creation.
- Mr. Augusto Rodriguez, representative from UNICEF, clarified that children in the life cycle starts from 8 months up to 15 years old.
- The issue of lack existence and accessibility of schools for Indigenous People (IPs) communities was raised during the open forum. In resolve this issue, it was recommended that DEPED be consulted on this matter. Atty. Alan Ortiz said that education system should also be considered for IPs; IP land is considered an ancestral domain having conflict with establishment of schools on it.
- On SPES program, Mr. Edwin Bustillos recommended that DOLE to monitor these employers. Aside from SPES, it may also be considered the Labor Education for Graduating Students (LEGS).
- On cross cutting issue, it was recommended to monitor other establishments on PWD accessibility.

**GROUP 3 : SPF 3 (INCOME SECURITY FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE)
LABOR MARKET INTERVENTIONS**

- Mr. Luis Daniel Dela Cruz presented the outputs of the discussion for livelihood program and followed by DOLE RO-I Director Grace Ursua for labor market services. Lastly, Mr. Nomer M. Pascual of TESDA RO III ended the group presentation by sharing the discussion points for TESDA programs.
- Mr. Abner Manlapaz noted that the Philippine government must look into the issue of labor contracting. He also inquired on how tax incentive for hiring PWDs be promoted through PESO or PHILJOBNET to encourage more private companies to employ PWDs. Lastly, he noted that there is a need to establish a monitoring mechanisms to check employment discriminations against marginalized sectors such as elderly, indigenous people, PWDs and etc.
- DOLE RO IV-A Director Ma. Zenaida Campita raised her concern regarding the monitoring of the implementation of TESDA's Dual Training System. There were cases that accredited schools are not directly working with employers or industries for technical trainings, but instead with contractors.
- Mr. Luis Reynoso clarified that the non-recognition of Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on DOLE-registered associations is due to the fact that the aim of the said associations is lined towards the mutual protection of workers, and not for economic purposes. It was suggested then to upgrade the registered groups into cooperative. Another concern raised was the issuance of Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Commission on Audit (COA) and DSWD to centralize the accreditation of non-government organizations to access government funds.

**GROUP 4 : SPF 3 (INCOME SECURITY FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE)
SOCIAL WELFARE AND SAFETY NETS**

- Mr. Nestor Asuncion, TIPC representative from NCR, presented the outputs of discussion on social welfare and social safety nets.
- Mr. Abner Manlapaz of Social Watch raised that there is a need to resolve the issue that implementation the disaster responses in the communities are being citizenship-based since it may limit the access of some individuals to such crucial services. In response, Director Satumba said that during their discussion about government emergency employment programs, the issue of procurement process was highly raised by the group. She added that the relaxation of requirements could improve the disaster response. Dr. Pargas clarified that PHILHEALTH give priorities on calamity-declared areas by providing extensions for submission of requirements, access to services and etc.
- Mr. Edwin Bustillos raised that aside to natural disasters, the victims of armed conflicts be included in the social protection floor.

**GROUP 5 : SPF 3 (INCOME SECURITY FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE)
SOCIAL INSURANCE**

- Mr. Edison Baddal of DILG Region 3 presented the outputs of discussion on social insurance schemes.
- Mr. Antonio Asper of FFW made it clear that unemployment insurance should be included. He also added the possibility to explore other private pension benefits schemes established by corporations to become portable once a member-employee transfer to another private company.
- DOLE RO IV-A Director Ma. Zenaida Campita added that the issue of portability of social security must be included in the discussion of social protection floor.
- On the issue of premium share contribution of kasambahays to SSS, Ms. Gloria Madayag that there is a lack of information among the kasambahay on the amount of contribution sharing between them and the employers. Director Satumba concurred on the recommendation to intensify advocacy campaigns on social security benefits.

**GROUP 6 : SPF 3 (INCOME SECURITY FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE)
OFWs and Migrant Workers**

- Mr. Edwin Bustillos, sectoral representative from formal labor and migrant workers, presented the outputs of discussion on OFWs and Migrant workers.
- Dr. Israel Pargas of PHILHEALTH inquired about the responsiveness of the bilateral agreements under the policy recommendation to the ASEAN integration and the feasibility of the government to subsidize the social security contributions of the OFWs and migrant

workers. Mr. Bustillos replied that the recommendation for government subsidies came with the recognition that there is a gap on the payment among foreign employers. Regarding bilateral agreements, the group agreed to emphasize that the said agreement should be in line with the adopted ILO conventions.

- Regarding the issue on how the cases of victims of human trafficking and illegal recruitment, DSWD noted that the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has already started the conduct of orientations among consulates. One of the recommendations during the orientations was for DSWD to deploy more social welfare attaches.
- Mr. Luis Reynoso said that there is a need to intensify information campaign on social security benefits (e.g. SSS, PHILHEALTH) among OFWs and migrant workers. Social security and health insurance should be perceived as personal investment instead of cost to encourage more of enrollees from the said sector.

**GROUP 7 : SPF 4 (INCOME SECURITY FOR ELDERLY) AND
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

- Mr. Nelson Nuñez, sectoral representative for urban poor, presented the outputs of their discussion on SP 4 (Income security for elderly) and cross-cutting issues.
- On provision of discounts for goods and services, Mr. Antonio Asper recommended to include the discount for water and electricity bills provided that the household is taking care of their elderly. Mr. Abner Malapaz noted that the services for the elderly and marginalized sectors should not be limited to provision of discounts since some individuals from the said sectors have limited purchasing power.
- Mr. Edison Baddal of DILG Region 3 inquired if PHILHEALTH has an actuarial projection to support the provision of health care benefits. In response, Dr. Israel Francis Pargas assured that they are doing actuarial projection as fundamental for social insurance agencies.

Director Erlinda M. Capones of NEDA Social Development Staff delivered the closing remarks. She acknowledged the participants for their active participations in the said consultations and made an assurance that all the inputs will be considered and recognize in the succeeding ABND activities.

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1 DOLE Undersecretary Reydeluz Conferido delivered his Opening Message. He encourage everyone to be realistic and widen their perspective in identifying gaps and recommendations for social protection floor.



2 Ms. Loveleen De, ILO Social Protection Consultant, gave a walkthrough about the social protection floor and the assessment-based national dialogue exercise.

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3 Ms. Girlie Casimiro, Chief EDS from NEDA, led the discussion of SPF2 (Income Security for Children) and Cross Cutting Issues Working Group.



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4 After the presentations from resource speakers on social protection floor and assessment-based national dialogue, the participants were able to give their comments and questions during the open forum.



5 Mr Rogelio Tarriela, TIPC-NCR representative from Management sector, gave his comments on labor market services during the opening forum after the presentation of SPF3 (Labor Market intervention) group.