



Human Capital: The Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program (4Ps) of the Philippines

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Abstract:

The Millennium Development Goals is a United Nation's initiative that focuses on the eradication of poverty, environmental protection, human rights and the protection of the vulnerable. Philippines is one of the third world countries that aims to break the cycle of poverty. In 2007, the government come up with a program known as Ahon Pamilyang Pilipino (APP) Program under the administration of Pres. Gloria M. Arroyo which becomes Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program in 2012 under the administration of Pres. Benigno C. Aquino. The nature of the program was adapted from the countries in Latin America such as Brazil, Mexico and Columbia. It is a conditional cash transfer program for the identified eligible beneficiaries and has been implemented nationwide for a decade. The program provides social assistance (financial – short term) and social development (human capital - long term). Cash grants are based on compliance to the program's conditionality's that focus on health, education and family development as an advocacy for empowerment especially the women. The major roles of the implementers are to monitor the beneficiary's compliance and; provide referrals to whatever the family needs skills training, employment, capital assistance, medical assistance and more. The program is in partner with different stakeholders to fully provide the services needed and appropriate for every household. It has been proven that no program is perfect, there must be some loopholes during the course of the implementation. Critics from different agencies sprout everywhere to evaluate and question the effectiveness of the program. However, program advocates surrender their selfless dedication and passion believing that everyone deserves a chance to change and improve. The main goal of the program is to uplift the level of well-being of every household from survival, subsistence to self-sufficient. Whatever outcome or impact will the program have with the clients, is the government's legacy. This article shows milestone of every beneficiaries of the program.

Definition of Terms:

Community – a group of people who live in the same area and interact with each other.

Conditional Cash Transfer – The financial assistance given to the partner beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program on the condition of compliance with the program requirements.

Family – the smallest unit of society.

Family Development Session – Sessions where parents are taught lessons on family life, caring for mothers and children, violence in the home and community participation.

Gender Equality – the same rights and opportunities across different sectors of society including their participation in social, economic and cultural development.

Indigenous People – ethnic groups living in a region considered the original dwelling of their ancestors.

Investment in Human Capital – Investing in human capital or the stock of competencies, knowledge, social and personality attributes, and abilities in order to work and produce economic value.

Intergenerational Poverty – refers to the transmittance of poverty through generations.

Millennium Development Goals – were the eight international development goals for the year 2015 that had been established following the Millennium Declaration.

Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program – the national program that seeks to alleviate poverty and improve the lives of poor households by investing in health and education.

Preventive Health Care – steps taken by health professionals to prevent diseases.

Poverty – the condition in which a family has insufficient capacity to meet its member's basic needs.

Self-reliance Stage – the stage of a partner beneficiary where they are able to provide the needs of the family without dependence on the conditional cash grants.

Survival Stage – this is the stage where the partner beneficiaries struggle to stay alive.

Supply Side – a part of the program that provides facilities that would assist the partner beneficiaries in complying with the requirements like schools, health centers and other partner agencies.

SWDI (Social Welfare Development Indicators) – an assessment tool that is administered to every Pantawid households to determine and monitor the families' growth in social and economical well-being.

Vulnerability – refers to the physical, social, economic and environmental conditions that increase the possibility of risks arising from hazards in the community.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Millennium Development Goals is a United Nation's initiative that focuses on the eradication of poverty, environmental protection, human rights and the protection of the vulnerable. Philippines is one of the third world countries that aims to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty through the **PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program. PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program** (English: Bridging Program for the Filipino Family), the flagship poverty alleviation program of the **former Pres. Benigno C. Aquino administration**, is formerly known as *AhonPamilyang Pilipino*, the flagship poverty alleviation program of the administration of **former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**. It is a conditional cash transfer program of the Philippine government under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as the lead government agency of the program. The DSWD patterned after the conditional cash transfer (CCT) schemes in Latin American and African countries like Brazil (BolsaFamilia) and Mexico (Oportunidades) by John Gerald B. Santiago, which have lifted millions of people around the world from poverty. In 2007, the DSWD pre-pilot tested in municipalities of Sibagat and Esperanza in Agusan del Sur; the municipalities of Lopez Jaena and Bonifacio in Misamis Occidental, the Caraga Region; and the cities of Pasay and Caloocan in a 50 million pesos budget. From *Ahon Pamilyang Pilipino* it was then renamed **PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)** by Santiago and Samantha A. Vizconde on July 16, 2008 by administrative order number 16, series of 2008 and set implementing guidelines. It aims to educate many Filipino children starting from pre-school education to secondary education by giving them daily allowances as they go to their daily classes. Their parents benefit from the program since their children learn a lot in school and they are also given dietary allowances for food of their children as their children go to schools. The **PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)** is a human development measure of the national government that provides conditional cash grants to the poorest of the poor, to improve the health, nutrition, and the education of children aged 0-18.

II. OBJECTIVES

The program has dual objectives:

1. **Social Assistance**, giving monetary support to extremely poor families to respond to their immediate needs; and
2. **Social Development**, breaking the intergenerational poverty cycle by investing in the health and education of poor children through programs such as:
 - ✓ Health check-ups for pregnant women and children aged 0 to 5;
 - ✓ Deworming of schoolchildren aged 6 to 14;
 - ✓ Enrolment of children in daycare, elementary, and secondary schools; and
 - ✓ Family Development Sessions.

III. SELECTION PROCESS

Government project proposals are based on presented facts and statistics. Prior to the conduct of **PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program**, data were gathered by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) or

currently known as the Listahanan. It is an information management system that identifies who and where the poor are, led by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). It aims to establish a socio-economic database of households that will be used in identifying the beneficiaries of any national social protection programs by identifying the poor and non-poor using a statistical model called Proxy Means Test. It predicts the income of each household using different variables as reference which will be then compared with poverty threshold of every respective city or provinces in the Philippines.

Selection involves four phases:

1. Preparatory Phase – prioritizing areas to assess.
2. Data Collection and Analysis Phase - identifying the poor households thru interview using Household Assessment Form (HAF) and administration of Proxy Means Test (PMT).
3. Validation and Finalization Phase – validation of the identified poor and non-poor households and preparation of finalist of household that are eligible for the program.
4. Data Report Generation Phase – final list were generated and scrutinized some group of experts from the National Technical Advisory Group which is composed of different government agencies and representatives from the academe.

Data are also made available to National Government Agencies (NGAs) and other stakeholders (e.g. PhilHealth) that provide programs and services to the individuals who are identified poor, vulnerable and marginalized. Currently, the 4Ps operates in all the 17 regions in the Philippines, covering 79 provinces, 143 cities, and 1,484 municipalities. Beneficiaries were selected through the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR), which identifies who and where the poor are in the country.

In general, the following criteria must be satisfied to become eligible for the program:

- Residents of the poorest municipalities, based on 2003 Small Area Estimates (SAE) of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB)
- Households whose economic condition is equal to or below the provincial poverty threshold
- Households that have children 0-18 years old and/or have a pregnant woman at the time of assessment
- Households that agree to meet conditions specified in the program

IV. PANTAWIDPAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4PS)

The **PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program** also known as 4Ps is a national program that aims to uplift the lives of poor households nationwide by investing in their education and health. The partner beneficiaries are expected to understand the importance of complying with the conditions set according to the goals of the program. It is also the government's tool to empower the vulnerable and marginalized by conducting regular monthly lectures to strengthen the capacities of the beneficiaries specifically the parents by capacitating them to become

responsible parents; and enables the household to be socially aware, involve and participative in all community development activities. The program invests in human capital by addressing the arising issues in health, nutrition and education of children age 0-18. It also provides financial assistance to the eligible beneficiaries who comply with the conditions set by the program. In totality, the program aims to facilitate the role of the government to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which commits to:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

V. THE COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

A. Family Development Session

This is one of the principal components of the major component of the program that aims to empower and nurture each family to have a strengthened and responsible family role through the conduct of regular monthly sessions. These sessions seeks to teach and enhance knowledge and skills of each Pantawid members in health, education, psychosocial needs of children, positive family values, marital relationships and involvement in community development.

Topics that are often discussed are:

- ✓ The Face of Poverty in the Family and in the Community
- ✓ Basic Information on PantawidPamilya Pilipino Program
- ✓ Implementing Partners and Their Responsibilities
- ✓ Promoting the Rights of the Children
- ✓ Promoting Gender Equality
- ✓ Recognition and Respect of Indigenous Cultural Communities
- ✓ Laws that Protects Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ Disaster Preparedness
- ✓ HIV/AIDs Awareness
- ✓ Communicable Diseases: Prevention and Care
- ✓ Financial Literacy
- ✓ Responsible Parenthood
- ✓ Family Planning
- ✓ Positive Parent-Child Relationship
- ✓ Prenatal and Postnatal Care
- ✓ Early Childhood Care and Development
- ✓ Prevention of Child Abuse, Violence and Exploitation
- ✓ Laws about Violence against Women and their Children
- ✓ Personality Development
- ✓ Community Gardening
- ✓ Active Citizenship
- ✓ Many more.

B. Strengthening of Health and Nutrition

This is one of the principal conditions of the program. The Department of Health (DOH) ensures that the partner beneficiaries will comply in the following circumstances:

- ✓ Regular prenatal and post natal check-up.
- ✓ Complete immunization of children below 5 years old.
- ✓ School aged children must be dewormed based on the mandate of DOH.

C. Strengthening Education of Children aged 0-18

The Department of Education (DepEd) is mandated to provide and ensure the availability of proper education services to enable the beneficiaries to comply with the conditions of the program.

- ✓ Ensure that the child attends the school regularly with 85% attendance each month.
- ✓ All children in school age must be enrolled.

PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Systems

Supply Side – ensures the availability of the facilities and services on health, nutrition and education.

Beneficiary Data Management – updates and manages basic information of each household.

Compliance Verification – monitors and verifies the compliance of each family member to the conditions of the program as basis of the grants received.

Grievance Redress – facilitates the filed complaints, appeals and resolutions involved in the implementation of the program

Implementing Partners and their Responsibilities

NPMO/RPMO (National/ Regional Project Management Office) – where suggestions, recommendations, decisions and policies for the proper implementation of the Program. They directly implements and direct the program down to the municipal/city level to ensure that the rules and regulations are implemented. This also includes the *City/Provincial Operations Office* of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and; the *City/Municipal Link* who fully implements the program.

National/ Regional/ Provincial/ Municipal Advisory Committee - these are inter-agency committees that give suggestions and solutions for the proper implementation and enhancement of the program. They ensure that proper services in all levels in the local government level are sufficient and available for the beneficiaries. The National Advisory Committee is the highest policy-making body of the program which is composed of the representatives from other agencies. Policies can be from the municipal to the national level through the advisory committees.

These National Advisory Committees are:

- ✓ Department of Social Welfare and Development
- ✓ Department of Education
- ✓ Department of Health
- ✓ Department of Labor and Employment
- ✓ National Economic and Development Authority
- ✓ Department of Budget and Management
- ✓ Department of Interior and Local Government
- ✓ National Anti-Poverty Commission
- ✓ National Nutrition Council
- ✓ Commission on Population
- ✓ National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
- ✓ Council for the Welfare of Children
- ✓ Philippine Commission on Women

Independent Advisory and Monitoring Committee – provides clarification and recommendation from different private members of the society for the improvement of the program. This is composed of the representatives from business (skills training, employment or capital assistance) and academe sectors (scholarship or sponsorship)

Partnership with Civil Society Organizations and other Volunteers – composed of volunteers from other organizations and associations which serve as guide, protectors and partners in the implementation of the program e.g. Red Cross, Faith-Based Group (for Values Formation) etc. Further, in partnership with the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Labor and Employment, and the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges, 4Ps has enrolled 36,003 beneficiaries in state universities and colleges as of June 2015. Moreover, in partnership with PhilHealth, 4Ps has covered 4.4 million beneficiaries under the National Health Insurance Program.

Conditions and Compliance

In order to receive the subsidies, all the succeeding conditions must be met by the household-beneficiaries:

1. Pregnant women must avail pre- and post-natal care, and be attended during childbirth by a trained professional;
2. Parents or guardians must attend the family development sessions, which include topics on responsible parenting, health, and nutrition;
3. Children aged 0-5 must receive regular preventive health check-ups and vaccines;
4. Children aged 6-14 must receive deworming pills twice a year; and
5. Children-beneficiaries aged 3-18 must enroll in school, and maintain an attendance of at least 85% of class days every month.

VI. CASH GRANTS

The 4Ps has two types of cash grants that are given out to household-beneficiaries:

- **Health grant:** P500 per household every month, or a total of P6,000 every year
- **Education grant:** P300 (elementary) or 500(high school) per child every month for ten months, (a household may register a maximum of three children for the program)

These cash grants are distributed to the household-beneficiaries through the Land Bank of the Philippines or, over-the-counter payment schemes such as Globe G-Cash remittance and rural bank transactions.

Unconditional Cash Transfer(UCT)

The UCT is the tax subsidy provided under the TRAIN law to help the poor cushion the adverse economic effect of the policy. It is considered to be the biggest tax reform mitigation program under the TRAIN law which seeks to provide 10 million beneficiaries with cash subsidies amounting to P200 a month for 2018 and P300 a month for 2019 and 2020. According to OIC Leyco, “It is up to the lawmakers if the UCT will be extended. However, with or without the UCT program, DSWD still has other programs which the poor can access when needed.” The UCT cash grant is a top up benefit for Pantawid beneficiaries who are also receiving their regular cash grant and

P600 rice subsidy from the Pantawid program. DSWD also coordinated with the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and came up with a joint circular on the UCT program implementation which specifically states that the funds will distributed through the Land Bank of the Philippines and to be used in accordance to the operational guidelines of the of DSWD. To minimize the administrative costs, the DSWD has decided to give the UCT cash grants annually.

Survival to Self-sufficiency Assessment

The ultimate goal of the program is to uplift the level of well-being from being a survival to self-sufficiency where the household is able to live without the assistance from the program. Initially, all eligible members belonged to survival level or the poorest from the poor. In 2016, the DSWD conducted an administration of SWDI (Social Welfare Development Indicator) assessment tool to every Pantawid household to assess the development of their education, health, economic and social status from the interventions given. For economic sufficiency, beneficiaries will be evaluated based on the employable skills of members, employment and salary, source of income, membership to social security and access to financial institutions. The social adequacy, on the other hand, will rate the families based on the members’ health condition, nutrition and education, access to safe drinking water and sanitary toilet facility, house construction and ownership, and awareness of social issues. Results of this assessment will determine the needs and capacities of every PantawidPamilya household and will be used by the DSWD in the planning of interventions to help them improve their families’ living condition and later become self-sufficient. Interventions may include employment facilitation, skills training, provision of livelihood opportunities and referral to other programs and services of the DSWD, other national government agencies, local government units and private organizations. The SWDI results will also become the baseline data of the Department in monitoring the progress of the beneficiaries, especially in improving the capacities of PantawidPamilya families in accessing opportunities to improve their level of well-being. Once they are identified as self-sufficient, the household will be recommended to waive from the program.

Impact Evaluation

The program started in 2007, the government expanded the program in December 2016 to reach a total of 20 million Filipinos belonging to 4.4 million households. Based on the recent update of World Bank, they have found out that there are 9 million children who are currently benefiting from the program, 1.9 million of which are in high school. The program has also achieved the highest number of enrolled elementary age children of 4Ps households. As of 2017, the PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program is the world’s fourth-largest CCT program based on population coverage. It complements the government’s other development priorities such as generating employment and creating livelihood opportunities for the poor. Pantawid households invest more in working assets (livestock, machineries) than non-beneficiaries. The 4Ps households spend more on basic needs such as food, education and medicine that stimulate the growth of the local economy. In terms of social protection programs, the Pantawid included, have cushioned the

poor from the hostile impacts of various shocks the country experienced in the previous years. A study estimates that the program reduced its poverty rate of 1.4 percentage points per year or 1.5 million less poor Filipinos. As to the education, there are 10.18 million children currently benefit from CCT, 1.9 million of which are in high school. It has been observed that discrimination in school was reduced, thus it surges the enrolment rate in elementary age children of the program. Enrolment in high school students also increases to 6%. Cases of child labor notably decrease during the implementation of the program. Lastly, there have been 333,673 graduated from high school in 2015, 13,400 of which received honors. Moreover, it has been noticed that significant reduction in severe stunting among beneficiary children; decreased maternal mortality in the past five years because more mothers deliver babies in health facilities and; drastic decrease in gambling and alcoholism in 4Ps households (spending on vices was lower).

VII. SUMMARY

Overall, through the implementation of PantawidPamilyang Pilipino Program, it has been proven that there has been a remarkable poverty reduction impact of each year. Household heads, spouses, and other adults are more encouraged and motivated to work and put up their own businesses. Most of the 4Ps parents are now more optimistic, aware and goal-driven about their situation and their children's futures. The program helped the poor household improve their health, provide each child the education they deserve and optimum social assistance in achieving a decent and upright life. Further, each family member becomes more participative in their community development activities. Therefore, the program is recommended to continue and serve another set of poor households in the Philippines.

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