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Evaluation and assessment of the effectiveness of the DSWD internal and external convergence as operationalized by the regional, provincial, and city/municipality action teams

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Philippine Institute for Development Studies  
*Surian sa mga Pag-aaral Pangkaunlaran ng Pilipinas*

Evaluation and Assessment of the Effectiveness  
of the DSWD Internal and External Convergence  
as Operationalized by the Regional, Provincial,  
and City/Municipality Action Teams

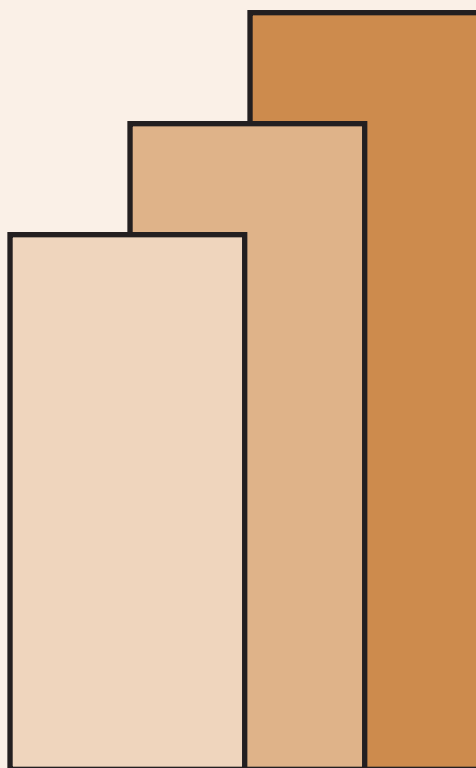
*Jose Ramon G. Albert and Connie B. Dacuycuy*

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December 2017

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# Final Report

**PROJECT: Evaluation and Assessment of the Effectiveness of the  
Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)  
Internal and External Convergence  
as Operationalized by the Regional, Provincial, and City/Municipal Action Teams**

A Study<sup>1</sup> Prepared by

*Philippine Institute for Development Studies*

December 11, 2017

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<sup>1</sup> The study is led by Jose Ramon G. Albert, Ph.D. and Connie B. Dacuycuy, Ph.D. as principal investigator and co-investigator, respectively. Both Dr. Albert and Dr. Dacuycuy are Senior Research Fellows of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS). Support for drafting the Report is provided by Jana Flor V. Vizmanos and Lora Kryz C. Baje, research assistants at PIDS. Field work and phone interviews have been undertaken by Jose Ramon G. Albert, Ph.D., Connie B. Dacuycuy, Ph.D., Sonny N. Domingo, Ph.D., Michael Ralph M. Abrigo, Ph.D., Maureen Ane Rosellon, Winnie A. Gerio, Jana Flor V. Vizmanos, Lora Kryz C. Baje, Emma P. Cinco, Susan Pizarro, and Lucita Melendez, all of PIDS.

## ABSTRACT / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study aims to describe and examine organizational structures, business processes, and capacity development, as they relate to the design of DSWD's Convergence Strategy. The process evaluation is useful from an organizational learning perspective since DSWD wants to improve the quality of its work. This process evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach which integrates qualitative and quantitative analysis. It entailed a desk review of DSWD documents (especially *Tatsulo* Manual and memorandum circulars). Primary data were collected through focus group discussions and interviews of DSWD officials and staff, beneficiaries, and partners especially in twelve study areas.

Key findings on organizational structures underscore the need to take stock of DSWD documents and update them, to strengthen responsibilities on coordination and M&E, and to incentivize leadership and innovation.

Key findings on business processes emphasize the need to strengthen IT initiatives for internal and external use, to improve resource management (e.g., lessening caseloads, shortening travel reimbursement, enhancing office supplies availability and boosting knowledge infrastructure); to provide extra basis for programmatic interventions; to review the city/municipality action team functionality assessment tool and to develop a similar tool for the provincial action team; and, to standardize the individual performance review contract content and weights. Several good practices were observed, such as provision of awards for meritorious convergence initiatives; innovative practices of leaders in the field; ownership of plans by local governments; organization of convergence caravans, and some effective partnerships with civil society organizations.

Key findings on capacity development include the need to define specific deliverables on internal and external convergence at all levels, to provide regular orientations on the Convergence Strategy to staff and partners, and to strengthen collaboration with municipal LGUs by putting a face on success stories. There is also a need to strengthen feedback channels and data-sharing for enhancing strategic external partnerships.

**Key Words:** Convergence Strategy, social protection, process evaluation, organizational structures, business processes, capacity and partnership development

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## LIST of Acronyms

4Ps	<i>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino</i> Program
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIP	Annual Investment Plan
ALS	Alternative Learning System
AO	Administrative Order
ARDO	Assistant Regional Director for Administration
ARDO	Assistant Regional Director for Operations
ASP	Adaptive Social Protection
BA	Barangay Assembly
BL	Bridging Leadership
BUB	Bottom Up Budgeting
CBMS	Community-Based Monitoring System
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CDD	Community Driven Development
CEAC	Community Empowerment Activity Cycle
CIU	Crisis Intervention Unit
CLPI	Core Local Poverty Indicator
C/MAP	City/Municipality Action Plan
C/MAT	City/Municipal Action Team
CO	Central Office
CPEW	Convergence Program Evaluation Workshop
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Department of Agriculture
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DepED	Department of Education
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EF	Employment Facilitation
ELA	Executive Legislative Agenda
ELDP	Executive Leadership Development Program
FDS	Family Development Session
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FO	Field Office
GIDA	Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Area
IPCR	Individual Performance Contract Review
KC-NCDDP	KALAHI-CIDSS–National Community-Driven Development Program
KII	Key Informant Interview
KRA	Key Result Areas
LCE	Local Chief Executive
LCTP	Leadership Convergence Training Program
LGU	Local Government Unit
LPRAP	Local Poverty Reduction Action Plan
LPRAT	Local Poverty Reduction Action Team

MAC	Municipal Advisory Committee
MD	Microenterprise Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIAC	Municipal Inter Agency Council
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCTSU	National Convergence Technical Support Unit
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NGA	National Government Agency
NHTS-PR	National Household Targeting System - for Poverty Reduction
OBSUs	Offices, Bureaus, Services, and Units
OPG	Operations and Programs Group
PAT	Provincial Action Team
PDO	Project Development Officer
PIDS	Philippine Institute for Development Studies
PMO	Program Management Office
PO	People's Organization
PSA	Participatory Situation Analysis
PSU	Protective Services Unit
PSDS	Public School District Supervisor
RAC	Regional Advisory Committee
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RCC	Regional Convergence Coordinator
RCTSU	Regional Convergence Technical Support Unit
RD	Regional Director
RHU	Rural Health Unit
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SE	Social Enterprises
SI	Social Investigation
SLP	Sustainable Livelihood Program
SWADT	Social Welfare Action and Development Team
SWC	Social Welfare Officer II-Convergence
SWDI	Social Welfare and Development Indicators
SWO	Social Welfare Officer
TA	Technical Assistance
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNPMT	Unified National Project Management Team
URPMT	Unified Regional Project Management Team
VAWC	Violence Against Women and Their Children
YDS	Youth Development Session



## PART 1: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

### 1.1. Social Protection and Convergence

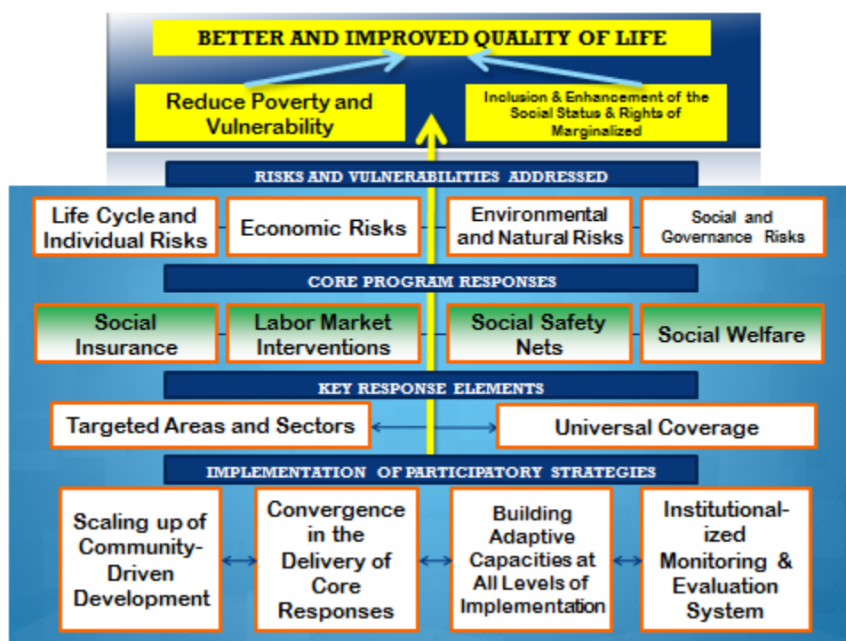
1. **Social protection is a policy framework practiced in many countries, including the Philippines, for building people's resilience to risks.** According to the last UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report (2015), in the span of two and one-half decades from 1990 to 2015, the world has reduced the proportion of the population living in extreme poverty (with incomes less than \$1.90<sup>2</sup> per person per day) from 43.0 percent to 13.0 percent. During this period of overall improved living conditions, countries have boosted international trade, and have worked toward regional integration and economic reform in the midst of technological innovations. The vast changes arising across the world, however, concomitantly also brought about old and new risks to well-being, which if ignored, can easily reverse the overall gains in welfare and development. Countries have developed social protection systems for “preventing, managing, and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's well-being.” (UNISDR, 2010).
2. **In the Philippines, the social protection<sup>3</sup> framework revolves around enhancing the social status and rights of the poor and various marginalized sectors.** Although the country has had robust economic growth especially since 2010, overall poverty reduction has remained lackluster and far from being inclusive (Albert, *et al.*, 2015). While some measurement issues regarding income and expenditure data collected by the Philippine Statistics Authority in its sample surveys (Albert, Asis, Vismanos, 2017) may put into question the reliability of aggregate statistics on official poverty rates, the overall picture still suggests that low income households lack resilience to key shocks and sources of risk to their income and expenditures (Albert and Ramos, 2010; Llanto, 2016; Mina and Reyes, 2017). These shocks to welfare include labor and employment shocks (job losses and lower wages), price shocks, demographic, reproductive and health-related shocks (illness or death of a household member, unplanned pregnancies), and natural disasters. Social protection systems in the country cover social assistance programs and projects, social services (including health care and homeownership

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<sup>2</sup> This is in 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP) prices. The PPP exchange rates are essentially the cost of living indices among countries. To obtain PPP, the “nominal” exchange rate (e.g., the market rate) between currencies is adjusted by the difference in prices between the countries whose currencies are being converted, one to the other. The result, for example, is that a given amount of Philippine pesos can buy the same basket of goods when used directly or when converted to US dollars using the price-adjusted or PPP dollar/peso exchange rate for a particular year (Albert, *et al.*, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Social protection “constitutes policies and programs that seek to reduce poverty and vulnerability to risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized by promoting and protecting livelihood and employment, protecting against hazards and sudden loss of income, and improving people's capacity to manage risks.” (National Economic and Development Authority Social Development Committee Resolution No. 1 Series of 2007 on “Adopting a Philippine Definition of Social Protection”)

support), social insurance (including mandated occupational or personal pension plans; voluntary occupational or personal pension plans and supplementary schemes), and labour market interventions (including regulations on industrial relations and labour market, and active labour market policies). Instruments for social protection are meant to improve employment prospects, reduce losses of human capital, and prevent people from further falling in their welfare conditions as a result of various risks (Figure 1.1). Key elements include identifying and responding to priority targets, as well as ensuring universal coverage for basic rights and services. Further, implementation strategies entail convergence in the delivery of social protection, scaling up Community Driven Development (CDD), building adaptive capacity, and institutionalized Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems. See, Villar (2013) for a discussion.



**Figure 1.1. Social Protection Operational Framework and Implementation Strategy in the Philippines.**

Source: Villar (2013)

3. **Effective social protection measures form a key component of social policy, promote social cohesion, and help bring about sustainable development.** As a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the Philippines as well as 192 other countries have committed to attaining the Global Goals by 2030. These include implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems for all, including social protection floors as agreed by all countries in 2012, and endorsed by the United Nations. Social protection is not explicitly one of the SDGs but it is a key instrument for the achievement of SDG1 (eradication of income poverty), SDG10 (reduction of income inequality), and SDGs2-6 (ending hunger, healthy lives, education, gender equality, access to water). Social protection is also recognized to be an essential instrument for the achievement of pro-poor and inclusive growth,

particularly increased employment and micro-small-and-medium enterprise (MSME) development (SDGs 8-9), as well as for social inclusion, social cohesion, state building, political stability and international co-operation (SDGs 16-17). Further, there is evidence that social protection also promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns and thus climate stability (SDGs 7 and 12-15). While social protection programs are important, it is also important to ensure value for money, such that there is evidence that these public investments are not going to waste.

4. **The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as the country's lead government agency in social welfare and development, has been providing various social services and social assistance programs, and aims to synchronize these social protection efforts to maximize their effects on beneficiaries.** Three of its major social protection programs for assisting the poor include: (i) the KALAHI-CIDSS–National Community-Driven Development Program (KC-NCDDP)<sup>4</sup>, (ii) the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* (also called *4Ps* or simply *Pantawid*)<sup>5</sup>, and

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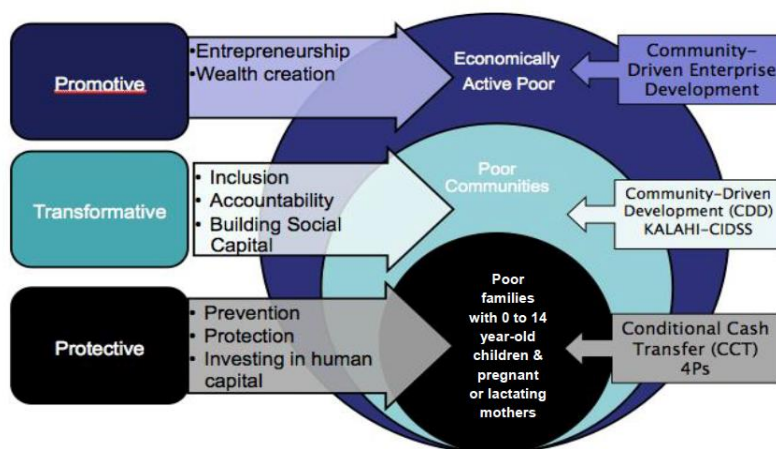
<sup>4</sup> The KC-NCDDP targets 847 municipalities in 58 provinces in 14 regions of the country (except for the National Capital Region and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao). The program is expected to impact some 5.4 million households in 19,647 barangays. The total cost of the KC-NCDDP over its 6-year implementation period is P43.9 billion. Of this total amount, three fourth (P33.4 billion) is allocated to community grants, a fifth (P8.3 billion) is allocated to capacity building, while M&E receives the remaining 5% (P2.2 billion) of total budget. The KC-NCDDP receives funding from both local and external sources. Local sources include the Philippines' national government, local government units (LGUs), and contributions from participating communities. External sources are loans and grants from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and grants from bilateral donors such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation of the Government of the United States, and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. See, ADB (2016) and DSWD *Tatsulo* Manual, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Piloted in 2007 among 30 thousand household-beneficiaries, and launched nationwide in 2008 to assist 300 thousand poor households, under its former name *Ahon Pamilyang Pilipino*, the CCT program has become government's largest social protection program with assistance currently given to 4.4. million families. *Pantawid* involves using a statistical model called a proxy means test to identify poor households (based on DSWD's *Listahanan* or National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction), from which, eligible households are then identified, and subsequently provided cash grants provided that the household beneficiaries comply with a set of conditions. In its original design, eligible households are those tagged as poor by the proxy means test, with children 0-14 years of age and/or a pregnant woman among its members. The cash grants were also designed to be provided to the households for a maximum of five years. Grants for education amounted to P3,000 per child per year (for a maximum of three children per household), while for health and nutrition, grants for each household aggregated to P6,000 per year. The conditions for the health grant were that: (i) pregnant household members should visit their local health center every month to avail of pre- and post-natal care based on the Department of Health (DOH) protocol; (ii) children 0-5 years old should visit their local health center every month to avail of health services based on the DOH protocol; (iii) children in primary school should be dewormed twice a year; and (iv) parent beneficiaries should be attending monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS). On the other hand, the conditions for the education grant were enrolment and at least 85 percent attendance at school for children. These co-responsibilities for the cash grant are meant to encourage the poor households to invest in human capital that will eventually enable them to break away from the clutches of intergenerational cycle of poverty, while at the same time, providing them some immediate financial relief, and fostering social inclusion. In mid 2013, then President Benigno S. Aquino III announced extension of support of *Pantawid* to children aged up to 18 years old starting 2014 in order to allow children-beneficiaries to finish high school. Education cash grants for children beneficiaries in high schools was set at P5,000 per child per year, with similar responsibilities on school attendance. See, Albert *et al.* 2015; DSWD *Tatsulo* Manual, 2011.

(iii) the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP)<sup>6</sup>. The KC-NCDDP is a six-year program (from 2014 to 2019) that seeks to empower communities in target municipalities to achieve improved access to basic services as well as to participate in more inclusive local planning and budgeting. *Pantawid* is the government's conditional cash transfer (CCT) that incentivizes 4.4 million poor families to make investments in the schooling and health of their family members; it is designed based on successful CCTs in Latin America. The SLP consist of two tracks of livelihood support programs initiated in January 2011, viz., the Microenterprise Development (MD) track (which provides microcredit services to the poorest residents of SLP beneficiary communities for establishing microenterprises and for providing business support to them), and the Employment Facilitation (EF) track (which facilitates the employment of program participants through job matchings and skills training courses). While these three programs have distinct designs and strategies and have separate Program Management Offices (PMOs)/Bureaus, all of these programs are focused on social protection, particularly assisting the poor and more vulnerable segments of Philippine society to prevent, reduce and/or cope with further risks to their welfare conditions. They provide a mechanism for ultimately reducing income poverty, which is part of the over-arching goals of the Philippine Development Plan, the country's long term vision (*Ambisyon Natin 2040*), as well as the SDGs. The DSWD has adopted a Convergence Strategy called "*Tatsulo*", meant to harmonize these three pro-poor social protection programs. The term "*Tatsulo*" is clearly a play of the Filipino words for triangle ("*tatsulok*") and for torch ("*sulo*"). The longer Filipino title for the Convergence Strategy is "*Tatlong Sulo Laban sa Kahirapan*", meaning "three torches to fight poverty." As suggested in the Framework for the Convergence Strategy (see Figure 1.2), the approach to empower the poor consists of a three-pronged approach : (1) protective, i.e., providing the poor with basic social protection through incentives directed at assisting them to invest in their human capital; (2) transformative, i.e., improving the financial access of the poor through community-driven development, and (3) promotive, i.e., supporting the entrepreneurial poor by providing credit, enhancing socio-economic skills, and developing entrepreneurial values. While these approaches may have different designs, convergence is meant to ensure that the systems for these approaches are synchronized so that intended outcomes in empowering the poor can be maximized.

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<sup>6</sup> Participation in either or both of the two SLP tracks would link the 4Ps families to income-generating opportunities to enable them to sustain their economic development and thus transition from survival to self-sufficiency. See, Ballesteros *et al.* 2016; DSWD *Tatsulo* Manual, 2011.



**Figure 1.2. DSWD Convergence Framework.**

Source: DSWD (2011) *Tatsulo Manual*

Alongside internal convergence of the three social protection programs, the DSWD also facilitates convergence with external stakeholders such as local government units (LGUs), national government agencies (NGAs) and civil society organizations (CSOs). As defined by DSWD’s Operations Manual, “convergence” is

“the act of directing complementary and/or synergetic interventions / programs to specified targets such as poor individuals, families, households and/or communities; ... (it is) the pooling of expertise and resources, and systematically channeling efforts in pursuit of a commonly agreed goal or objective; a common understanding of [the] what and how of a program, a common commitment and institutional support, and a common resolve for joint action. ... (It) calls for the synchronization and coordination of all interventions of the government (national and local) and the private sector in one geographical area to ensure that reforms in terms of poverty alleviation, among others, are achieved”. (DSWD Convergence Management Office, 2014).”

In other words, the DSWD convergence framework adopts a multisectoral coordinative approach to social protection for building resilience among the poor to cope with shocks and other risks to their welfare. This study, a process evaluation, assesses the extent to which the DSWD Convergence Strategy is practiced as per its design and plan.

## 1.2. Motivation of the Study

5. **This process evaluation of DSWD’s Convergence Strategy is mainly motivated from an organizational learning perspective.** As a public-sector organization, the DSWD aims not only to attain its mandate, but also to improve the quality of its operations. Various internal and external evaluations of its projects and programs have provided important opportunities for DSWD to reflect, explore and capture its many

experiences in the challenging and often emerging context in which the Department operates.

Given the evidence that social protection and assistance have led to improved resilience of beneficiaries to various risks in their welfare, the internal and external Convergence Strategy of DSWD, if designed and implemented properly, maximize outcomes for beneficiaries of the three social protection programs. A process evaluation of the DSWD Convergence Strategy can identify if the strategy worked as designed and can help the Department in assessing the effectiveness of the Strategy and the efficiency of the use of DSWD resources earmarked for the Strategy in its three-major social protection/assistance programs for the poor (i.e., the KC-NCDDP, *Pantawid*, and the SLP). Evaluations, including this process evaluation study on the Convergence Strategy, are important to know what works and what does not, so that the Department can make synergistic changes in its business processes to improve the quality of its service delivery.

For its track record in conducting impact evaluation studies, process evaluation studies, and other policy research, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) was invited by the DSWD to conduct within a period of six months, a design and implementation analysis of the Department's Convergence Strategy. This report describes the objectives, methods, and results of the process evaluation study conducted by PIDS and provides some key recommendations.

### **1.3. Study Objectives**

6. **The study aims to conduct an evaluation on the design and implementation of the DSWD (Internal and External) Convergence Strategy.** It seeks to examine the organizational structures, business processes and capacity development undertaken by the different administrative levels of DSWD in operationalizing the Convergence Strategy, from planning to implementation, to M&E, including reporting. Specifically, the process evaluation study aims to:
  - a. examine the processes on how DSWD planned and implemented the Convergence Strategy among its three major social protection/assistance programs for the poor, (i.e. the KC-NCDDP, *Pantawid*, and the SLP);
  - b. look into the guidelines issued in pursuance of the Convergence Strategy, as specified in the Manual on Convergence of DSWD Core Social Protection Programs and other documents, whether these were complied with/used by Central Office (CO), Field Office staff;
  - c. document good and promising practices of the field offices covered by the Convergence Strategy, if any; and,

- d. provide specific recommendations that will improve the overall implementation of the Convergence Strategy.

Thus, the study describes and assesses how the DSWD Convergence Strategy is implemented, i.e., if there is consistency in what has been planned as per the DSWD's *Tatsulo* (Operations) Manual on Convergence (2011), and how the field staff operate. The process evaluation would serve to determine how effectively the Convergence Strategy was implemented, and to look for gaps between planned and realized outcomes. In consequence, this study would help improve the design and implementation of the DSWD Convergence Strategy, and provide inputs in fine-tuning or redirecting the Strategy, if necessary. Further, the study can examine how the goals of the Strategy are aligned, and if there is some evidence that these are achievable, i.e. assess the theory of change behind the Strategy. The study will document good and promising practices in the field in the implementation of the Convergence Strategy. The process evaluation will also describe the effectiveness of management, and the efficiency of the use of the DSWD resources in the Convergence Strategy through a factual assessment. The study is also expected to provide specific recommendations that will improve the overall implementation of the Convergence Strategy.

#### **1.4. Milestones and Evolution of DSWD Convergence Strategy**

7. **The DSWD Convergence Strategy is an evolving initiative.** While the adoption of convergence policies was initiated as early as 1995 through the social reform agenda under the government of President Fidel V. Ramos, the DSWD first formulated the Convergence Strategy around 2011 with the issuance of the *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) and Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 18 series of 2012, indicating the Guidelines on Internal Convergence. Subsequent MCs and Administrative Orders (AOs) issued by DSWD have provided more flesh to the implementation of the Convergence Strategy.

The Department formulated various structures to oversee the coordinated and synchronized planning, M&E and implementation of the Convergence Strategy. It established the Poverty Reduction Programs Bureau (PRPB), to provide technical support for operationalizing the Convergence Strategy in the Department. The PRB was mandated to supervise the management and implementation of the Department's core poverty reduction programs, so the three core social protection programs were lodged under the PRPB. The DSWD also developed similar structures at the regional and local government level namely: the Regional Convergence Technical Support Unit (RCTSU), the PAT and the C/MAT. Further details on organizational structures for managing the Convergence Strategy are discussed in subsequent sections of this report. Through the MC 01 series of 2012, DSWD was re-clustered to further strengthen the Department's operation and to increase the efficiency and synchronicity of the Offices,

Bureaus, Services, and Units (OBSUs) at the CO. There were five OBSUs created: Office of the Secretary Group, Operations and Programs Group (OPG), Policy and Plans Group, Institutional Development Group, and General Administration and Support Services Group. The OPG was tasked to operationalize a focused approach in the development, implementation, and management of social welfare and development programs and services. As such, OPG was given the mandate to facilitate the Department's convergence efforts through effective coordination and collaboration within the Department and with line agencies. MC 07 series 2012 strengthened the Department's strategic partnership with CSOs in the convergence efforts through four broad categories of engagement, namely, *Bantay*, *Gabay*, *Kaagapay*, and *Tulay*. MC 18 series of 2012 defined the elements of internal convergence.

To reflect the changing thrusts and direction of the Department, SO 31 series of 2014 was issued to reassign, designate, and transform the PRB to the Convergence Management Office (CMO). The CMO was mandated to oversee the institutionalization, operationalization, and management of the Convergence Strategy through coordination and complementation of the Department's programs and services. As such, the CMO was responsible for planning, coordination, and monitoring of the Strategy, crafting of policy recommendations to Programs and Policy Group and external stakeholders, facilitating the development and implementation of convergence initiatives, developing institutional mechanisms in establishing and maintaining networks, building and sharing knowledge to further develop social protection programs and policies, and ensuring the implementation of Municipal Transition Plans.

Through MC 14 series of 2015, CMO became the National Convergence Technical Support Unit (NCTSU), which is mandated to provide technical and administrative support to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Promotive Programs. The NCTSU was tasked to operationalize Convergence Strategy and to implement Bottom-Up budgeting projects. The NCTSU is composed of a Technical Unit; a M&E Unit, and an Administrative Unit. The Technical Unit is responsible for the tasks of the defunct CMO plus tasks related to the C/MAT and PAT functionality, the convergence initiatives of project management office at the national, regional, and provincial levels, the conduct of the United National Project Management Team, and the dissemination of plans/activities/guidelines/policies to Field Offices.

8. **Over the years and consistent with the ideas espoused in MC 18 series of 2012, the DSWD has managed to put in place key elements that characterize the business processes and partnerships of the Convergence Strategy in the field offices.** Firstly, to the extent possible, household and community-focused program beneficiaries make use of a common targeting system, identified through the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR). Aside from being



the basis for identifying program beneficiaries, the NHTS-PR is also the basis for integrated social case management approach, active involvement of beneficiaries as partners, and joint planning of both synchronized and integrated programs. Secondly, the Social Welfare and Development Indicators (SWDI) are used as a case management tool to assess the conditions and needs of program beneficiaries, as a monitoring tool to track the improvement in their level of well-being; and, as an organizing framework for reflecting the common goal/objective of improving the level of well-being of families in the field from survival to subsistence to self-sufficiency. Thirdly, aside from the internal convergence mechanisms defined in MC No. 14, series of 2015, one external convergence mechanism involves the formulation, regular updating and ownership of the City/Municipal Action Plan (C/MAP) by DSWD and all its stakeholders. The C/MAP defines the interventions to be carried out by the C/MAT and the DSWD stakeholders as a response to the gaps identified in the SWDI.

The DSWD has developed multi-stakeholder partnerships with NGAs and LGUs, as well as with CSOs with the latter partnerships making use of several DSWD guidelines (e.g., MC 7, s. 2012; AO 4, s. 2015; and, MC 11 s. 2015).

9. **The core concept of the Convergence Strategy involves bringing together all actors (within and outside the Department) that engage in interventions for the poor and vulnerable under a unified sense of purpose that can ultimately multiply positive impacts of interventions on beneficiary communities, households, and individuals.** A report of the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2016) looks into the Convergence Strategy, through the lens of the DSWD's community-focused convergence. This ADB report points out that the DSWD Convergence Strategy has a household-focus (that first spotlights CCT beneficiaries, specifically to improve capacities of *Pantawid* families in accessing opportunities to improve their level of well-being by improving their livelihood). Related to (but distinct from) –the household–focused Convergence Strategy is the convergence or coordination mechanisms that relate to the KC-NCDDP and the poverty reduction programs of other national government sector agencies, particularly those funded and implemented under the Bottom Up Budgeting (BUB)<sup>7</sup> program of the government. The ADB (2016) Report summarizes the major benefits and constraints<sup>8</sup> in operationalizing the DSWD Convergence Strategy.

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<sup>7</sup> The current government has dropped the previous government's BUB program, although the spirit of the BUB continues under a different form: Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities, which provides resources for potable water supply and other projects to disadvantaged LGUs, with qualified LGUs determined based on the population of poor families in the community, vulnerability to disasters and other criteria. See, DILG- Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Joint Circular No. 1, Series of 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Five benefits identified in convergence include (i) Convergence maximizes resources for implementing DSWD programs. (ii) It reduces duplication, thus improving efficiency, saving time, and reducing costs. (iii) It addresses the multidimensional aspects of poverty, which in turn leads to optimum beneficial impact of development assistance. (iv) Convergence serves as a venue for the sharing of knowledge, data, and expertise. (v) Convergence leads to more

## 1.5. Instruments and Literature on Convergence

7. **Several national and global instruments are the foundation of the DSWD Convergence Strategy.** The Philippine Constitution, specifically, Article II, Section 9, on State Policies provides that “the State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and an improved quality of life for all.” Also, Article XIII, Section 11 on Health provides that “the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women and children.”

In 1995, then President Fidel V. Ramos signed the Administrative Order No. 194, providing for the adoption of the social reform agenda convergence policy and its operationalization, and for other purposes. The immediate past government under former President Benigno S. Aquino III, also established another convergence initiative, called the *Payapa at Masaganang Mamamayan* (PAMANA), extending whole-of-government development interventions to isolated, hard-to-reach and conflict-affected communities through forging strategic partnerships with national agencies in promoting convergent delivery of goods and services, and addressing regional development challenges in conflict-affected and vulnerable areas. Some form of convergence is also being implemented by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in its Whole-of-Nation approach for its Internal Peace and Security Plan (IPSP) *Bayanihan*. This essentially considers making use of multi-stakeholder partnerships with different government institutions, coupled with a people-centered security/human security approach to address the root causes of armed conflicts in the country. Last May 2017, the Senate also approved the Philippine Innovation Act, which called for

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coordinated and rationalized interventions for LGUs and beneficiary communities. On the other hand, five major constraints for implementing convergence mentioned include: There is no shared or unifying mission and vision for convergence. The various project management offices engaged in implementing convergence focus on their individual project goals and performance contracts. (ii) There are no clear guidelines and policies pertaining to convergence. For example, there are currently no functional mechanisms to help bring about sustained convergence. There is neither a permanent focal person for convergence in each of the programs, nor is there a coordinating office for issues relating to convergence. (iii) There is weak buy-in, significant resistance, and little awareness of key implementers and stakeholders regarding convergence. This is due to the absence of a clear communication message for convergence, lack of regular advocacy, irregular information dissemination meetings on convergence, and unavailability of updates on the convergence efforts of the various programs. (iv) Only limited resources—in terms of time, funds, and staff—have been devoted to the convergence effort. (v) There is no system for documentation of the experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from convergence.

the adoption of a whole of government (WOG)<sup>9</sup> approach for improving the innovation ecosystem in the country.

The Convergence Strategy, typically called a WOG approach when it is applied across several Departments in government, was first utilized internationally in 1997 by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (who then referred it as Joined-Up-Government). WOG is an overarching term for a group of responses to the silos in public sector and public services and a wish to increase integration, coordination and capacity (Ling 2002; Christensen, and Læg Reid, 2007). This public-sector management approach for collaboration and coordination of various government units with a shared framework has also been utilized broadly in several countries (i.e. United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Scotland, Finland, Netherlands, Ireland). The WOG approach has also been utilized for international cooperation in fragile states (OECD, 2006). While WOG approaches have been used in a few countries, these are for very broad purposes. To date, no systematic WOG approaches have been implemented specifically to coordinate social protection programs/systems except in the Philippines although it is recognized that effective and efficient coordination, as well as the involvement of local governments (UNDP, 2013), are important enabling factors in the delivery of social protection. In the Philippines, the DSWD has focused the WOG approach for social protection on its three major social protection programs, viz., the 4Ps, KC-NCDDP, and SLP, through its Convergence Strategy. Although some level of external convergence is being implemented with other government agencies (both national and local), this is only insofar as the three-major social protection programmes of the DSWD is concerned.

8. **Social protection policies, programs and projects of the country need to have more traction by being more integrated, collaborative and effective.** Collaboration can help in attaining outcomes that cannot be achieved by working in isolation. Further, it enables actors to address complex challenges, use knowledge and expertise across actors more effectively with shared understanding and a common purpose, and integrate support to become more efficient and effective. Unfortunately, the country's social protection and poverty programs tend to be in siloes. A number of studies (e.g., Development Academy of the Philippines, 2009; Manasan, 2009; Aldaba, 2008) observed that public interventions on social protection are fragmented, uncoordinated, inadequately funded, inadequately designed, short-lived, in some cases redundant, and in many cases even mistargeted and dysfunctional.

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<sup>9</sup> Defined by OECD (2006) as "one where a government actively uses formal and/or informal networks across the different agencies within that government to coordinate the design and implementation of the range of interventions that the government's agencies will be making in order to increase the effectiveness of those interventions in achieving the desired objectives"

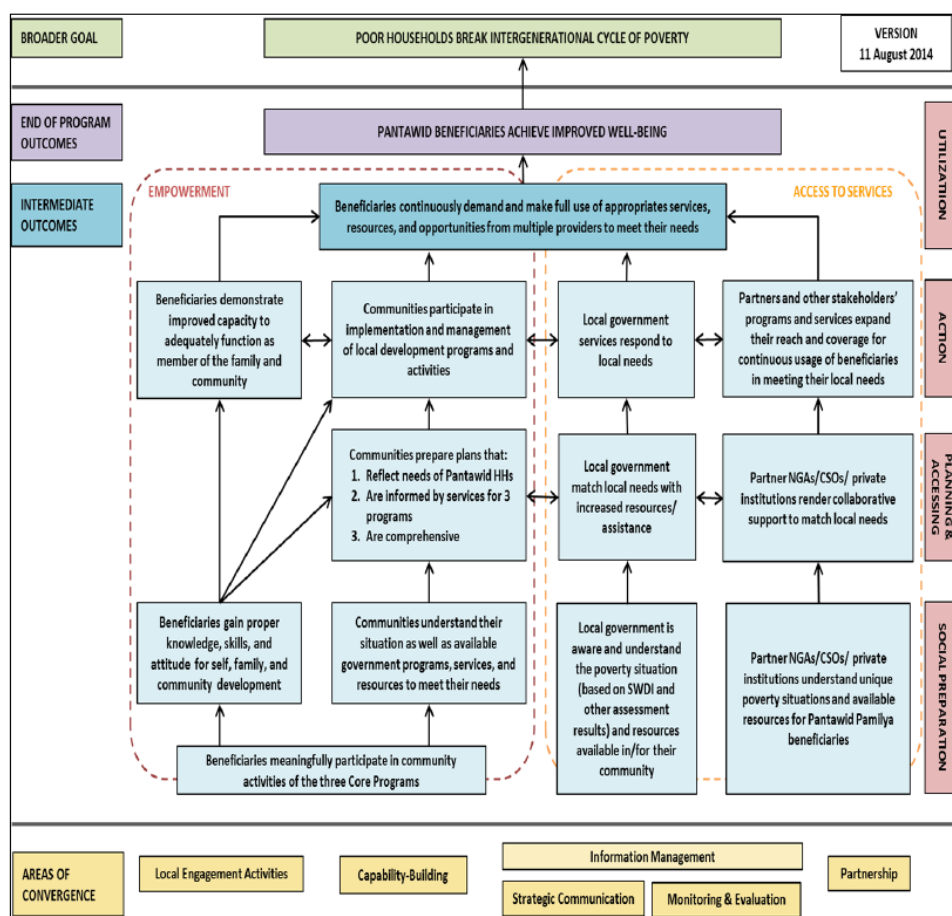
9. **The DSWD Convergence Strategy is expected to maximize the outcomes of the three DSWD social protection programs so that they may be leveraged for building resilience, particularly among the poor who are more vulnerable to shocks.** In particular, the rationale for convergence of the SLP and the 4Ps is to add value to the CCT education and health grants by bringing the beneficiaries closer to reaching the poverty line and enabling them to be engaged in sustainable livelihoods. Ballesteros *et al.* (2016) reports that as of December 2015, a fifth (22%) of the *Pantawid* families, the equivalent of 963,978 families (as of August 26, 2015), have been served in the SLP. Out of the nearly a million *Pantawid* families served in the SLP, a considerable majority, 86% (830,638 4Ps families) have been served through the Microenterprise Development (MD) Track while only 14% (133,340 4Ps families) have been served through the Employment Facilitation (EF) Track. According to the authors, the low take on the EF track puts a question on the role of DSWD in job matching services, with DOLE managing to roll out several labor market programs to increase employment among the marginalized and vulnerable sectors; however, the extent of linking these employment programs with the SLP has yet to be systematically undertaken.
10. **Critics of DSWD's social protection programs, especially *Pantawid* (which has a huge overall budget), suggest that these programs have not been effective in reducing poverty and that these interventions only encourage dependence of the poor on social assistance.** This criticism is not fair since the actual cash support for beneficiary families is quite small<sup>10</sup>, and further, the CCT is not designed to bring poor households out of poverty through the cash grants, though the gap in the poverty lines are brought down with the cash transfers. Orbeta, Paqueo and Spohr (2013) also point out that *Pantawid* has actually increased the desire for work of the household head and the spouse, as well as all adult members 18 years and above, and middle-aged workers 35-54 years old. There, however, is some validity in the criticism that interventions on social protection need to be more impactful.
11. **The DSWD Convergence Strategy is an attempt to improve the impact of the DSWD core social protection programs, coupled with improving the effectiveness of various pro-poor interventions by stakeholders of social protection.** The *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) mentions that the DSWD Convergence Strategy revolves around six themes: (1) targeting the beneficiary; (2) social facilitation and community mobilization; (3) social case management; (4) LGU and CSO engagement; (5) capability building; (6) M&E. Social protection, as an instrument for resilience building in inclusive and people-centered sustainable development, relies on the ability of

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<sup>10</sup> In 2012, an average family size of 6 needed about P29,765 to cross out of poverty, but the maximum grant amount of P15,000 is only half of the amount required by the poor to exit poverty (See Albert *et al.*, 2015).

various actors in the social protection arena to work together given common ground, and on the citizens to engage in wide-ranging dialogue with government. Poor households often do not have enough assets to depend on. Social protection, including social assistance support from government such as *Pantawid*, is important for building resilience of the poor against risks to their welfare. The 4Ps helps the poor so that they can invest in their human capital (as part of their co-responsibility to the social assistance) and become less vulnerable to income poverty with better education and health among their household members. However, it will not be enough merely to implement the CCT as this is meant to improve chances of poor households to exit poverty in the long term. The poor will still need help in the short term, particularly in employment and livelihood for improving their current welfare, and in improving the conditions in their communities. Thus, convergence of *Pantawid*, SLP and KC-NCDDP is extremely important.

12. **Working together should effect better outcomes.** DSWD directs complementary programs and interventions to specified target - poor and vulnerable individuals, families, and communities in order to operationalize the Convergence Strategy. This involves pooling of expertise and resources as well as systematically channeling efforts in building the resilience of these vulnerable people and communities. Convergence is meant to increase the impact of all social protection programs on the lives of these families and communities, and reduce their vulnerability to various idiosyncratic, area-wide and macroeconomic risks to welfare, yet reducing fragmentation and wastage of resources, and redundancy of efforts. The Department describes in a theory of change of the Convergence Strategy how the Strategy is supposed to deliver the desired results in various areas, such as local engagement activities, capacity building, information management and partnership (Figure 1.3).



**Figure 1.3. Theory of Change for DSWD Convergence Strategy**

Source: DSWD Briefer on the Convergence Strategy and Initiatives to operationalize the Strategy

The DSWD theory of change depicts how community planning, LGU matching of community requirements with resources, local engagement and collaboration of stakeholders (chiefly LGUs, but also include NGAs, CSOs and the private sector), active participation of communities in local development activities, lead to desired outcomes (i.e. beneficiary empowerment, improved well-being of individual/household beneficiaries and communities, and the broader outcome of poor families breaking out of poverty). The theory of change also provides some assumptions required for the changes to take place (such as beneficiaries having proper attitudes for transformation, as well as communities, LGUs and other stakeholders aware of conditions and resources available). LGUs are critical social protection stakeholders in the context of decentralization and their mandate on local service delivery (Layug, 2009). Various NGAs and CSOs are also engaged in interventions meant to help the poor expand their opportunities to reach their full potential, to assist poor families and communities mitigate the various exogenous risks and shocks they face regarding their living conditions, welfare and development, and, to help everyone.

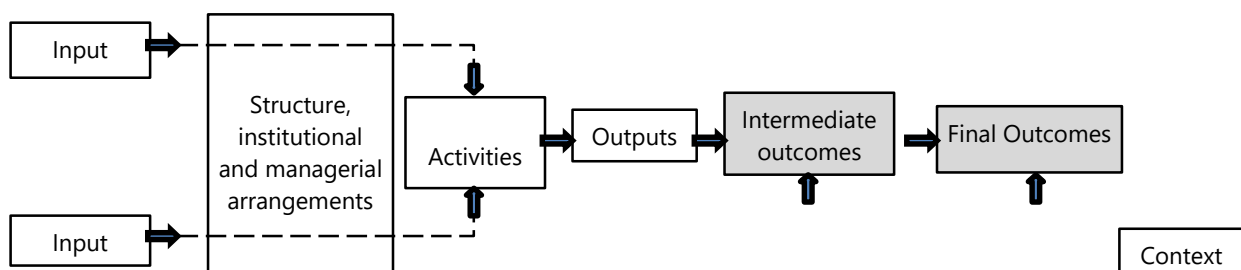
The challenge facing DSWD is to make sure that the impacts of its social protection programs, especially the three major ones, are maximized for resilience building as they continually face risks to their welfare conditions, and ultimately to empower the poor and vulnerable to have better chances in improving their plights. The basic question that this study attempts to answer is as follows: “Is the current implementation of the DSWD Convergence Strategy working as designed?”

Various good practices as well as areas for improvement in the implementation of the Convergence Strategy are discussed throughout this report. Some good practices pertain to the provision of incentives (in the form of awards) for meritorious convergence initiatives in field offices; innovative practices of C/MAT leaders; ownership of C/MAPs by LGUs; organization of convergence caravans, and some effective partnerships with CSOs. Areas for improvement include making organizational structures coherent, improving resource management, and strengthening partnerships, among other areas. Undoubtedly, the DSWD deserves credit for being open and receptive to third party evaluations of its work, and for commendably making serious efforts to continuously improve its service delivery cognizant of its role to provide help to those who need our help the most.

## PART 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Perspective of Institutions and Public Sector Production Process

13. **In implementing any strategy, policy, program, or project, an organization always faces institutional issues.** Institutions are comprised of both informal constraints such as customs or unwritten codes; and formal rules such as official policies and legislation (North, 1990; North, 1991). “Rules of the game” constrain human interaction and hence shape the structure of political, economic and social interaction. Given this perspective, the study analyzes the process of implementing DSWD Convergence Strategy with cognizance of not just the agency structures per se but also institutional issues that are significant in contextualizing operations. From the perspective of North’s institutional analysis, formal rules, informal constraints and enforcement characteristics constitute incentive systems that structure bureaucratic performance, and as such, the study has to examine institutional issues.
14. **Inasmuch as the three major social protection programs of DSWD are projects with a timeline, their management is viewed along the lines of inputs, outputs and outcomes in a context.** Consequently, this study also considers the public sector production process (Figure 2.1) in considering how internal convergence of the three major social protection programs is implemented. It is acknowledged that outputs and outcomes will eventually be critical in evaluating any program, and it is fundamental to set processes right despite critiques on the tendency of government to overemphasize the input and institutional side. Nevertheless, the process evaluation study is focused on drawing valuable insights regarding the production process involved in implementing the DSWD Convergence Strategy, not only internally but also externally.



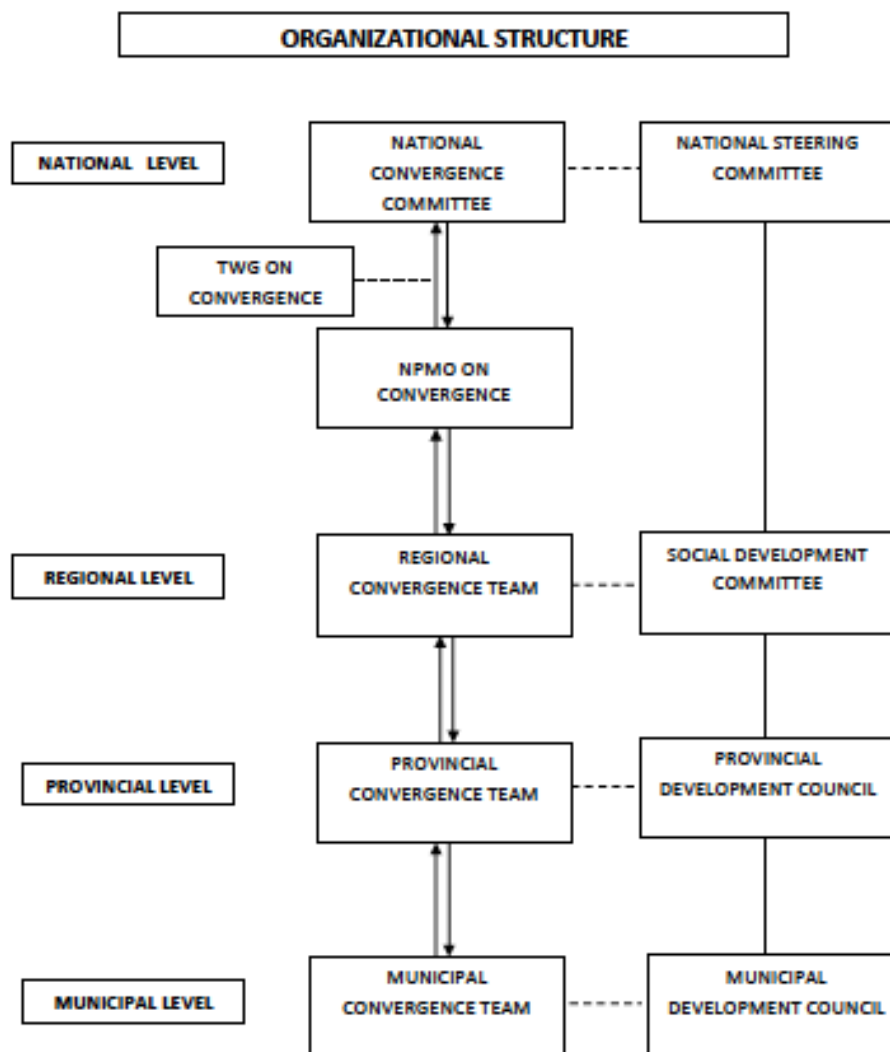
**Figure 2.1. Stages in the public-sector production process**

**Source:** Based on Van Dooren et al. (2006), Hatry (1999), Boyne and Law (2004), Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004), and Algemene Rekenkamer (2006); as cited in OECD (2009)



## 2.2. Evaluation Methodology: Process Analysis

15. **The process evaluation and assessment employed in this study involves identifying variations between plan and practice, in support of carrying out assessment of causes.** Shedding light on the causes of variation between design and implementation of the Convergence Strategy, and gathering insights for policy is the main value added of the study. The study looks into the objectives, procedures and details that make up the process of implementing the DSWD Convergence Strategy. Existing objectives, procedures and implementation details regarding the Strategy are to be revisited in analyzing cohesion and consistency, especially in the wake of changing leaderships and thrusts at the Department and the entire national government.
16. **The hierarchy of objectives in carrying out the Convergence Strategy are to be examined given the possibility that trying to achieve one set of objectives may result to having to forego attaining other objectives.** For instance, activities of each of the social protection programs may conflict with other works in the Convergence Strategy. Overloading of work assignments may also hamper critical tasks, such as social case management, particularly social case M&E, that DSWD staff are expected to regularly undertake. These are responsibilities in the Convergence Strategy that were not in the original designs of the three major social protection programs.
17. **Organizational structures that have been identified for implementing the Convergence Strategy are to be examined.** Typically, organizational structures in government bureaucracies are along functional lines, but while these have their benefits, they also have created silo workplaces that are significantly challenging to coordinate across units. The *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) outlines roles and responsibilities of various groups at the CO, as well as those for the teams at the regional, provincial and municipal levels (Figure 2.2). Criteria or rules and regulations, if any, that these groups follow in carrying out the Convergence Strategy are also to be included in the analysis. It is worth probing the deviations and adherence in practice to the design of the Convergence Strategy (as suggested in various DSWD documents) as such an examination provides input to areas where changes can be directed in the future.



**Figure 2.2. Organizational Structure in Implementing DSWD Convergence Strategy**  
Source: DSWD (2011) *Tatsulo Manual*

18. **Experiences of the C/MAT, especially its leader, as well as the heads of the corresponding action teams/committees in the provincial and regional levels on business processes and capacity development are to be documented and evaluated in this study.** The ensuing analysis involves identification of bottlenecks in the implementation of the Convergence Strategy and valuable information on good practices in process adherence is also collected from the evaluation. These concerns serve as inputs where changes can be instituted in order to rectify difficulties in the process flow and to incentivize good practices in convergence. The study also aims to assess whether policy, planning, leadership roles, accountability, implementation procedures, as well as M&E are aligned, and, more importantly, operationalized as per design.

## 2.3.Mixed Methods Approach

19. **This process evaluation study employed a mixed-methods approach that integrate both qualitative and quantitative analysis.** An understanding of institutions, policy and practice was combined with the assessment of primary as well as secondary data and information from documentary sources. The cumulative knowledge, training and experience of the PIDS project team was utilized to carry out an evaluation of factors that may cause the variation in the plan and practice of the Convergence Strategy. This widened the reach of investigation and results in a more robust analysis. The evaluation of the business processes was also driven by evidence. This allowed validation of possible causes by corroborating across several indicators. Further, the identification of critical factors of variation was facilitated, drawing focus on the more important issues in the process.

The process evaluation study entailed a desk review, particularly an analysis of DSWD documents especially the DSWD *Tatsulo* Manual (2011), DSWD memorandum circulars (MCs) pertaining to convergence, and other relevant documentation and secondary data. Further, the PIDS team conducted 37 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 34 key informant interviews (KIIs) of the following:

- a. CO Level<sup>11</sup>:
  - i. 3 Representatives of the NCTSU
  - ii. Two National Program Managers
- b. Regional Level<sup>12</sup>:
  - i. Two Regional Directors (RDs) and Two Assistant Regional Directors for Operations (ARDOs)
  - ii. Six Regional Convergence Coordinators (RCCs)
- c. Provincial Level<sup>13</sup>:
  - i. Ten Provincial Action Team (PAT) Leaders and Nine PAT members
- d. City/Municipal Level<sup>14</sup>:
  - i. Twelve City/Municipal Action Team (C/MAT) Leaders
  - ii. One hundred seven C/MAT Members
- e. One hundred fifteen<sup>15</sup> Beneficiaries of SLP, KC-NCDDP, *Pantawid*

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<sup>11</sup> As per inception report, the PIDS study team targeted to interview the Undersecretary for Operations and Programs Group-Promotive, as well as National Program Managers of *Pantawid*, SLP, KC-NCDDP, and NCTSU, but managed to interviewed only three representatives of NCTSU and two National Program Managers in the CO.

<sup>12</sup> At the regional level, the PIDS targeted to interview six RDs and six RCCs for the six regions, and actually interviewed a total of two RDs, two ARDOs and all six RCCs.

<sup>13</sup> At the provincial level, ten PAT leaders were targeted for interview; all were interviewed, with some PAT leaders accompanied by PAT members. A total of 9 PAT members were interviewed, aside from the 10 PAT leaders.

<sup>14</sup> Across 12 city/municipal areas, the PIDS targeted to interview twelve CMAT leaders and one hundred eight CMAT members (i.e., nine per city/municipality). All CMAT leaders and nearly all targeted (short of one) CMAT members were interviewed.

<sup>15</sup> Among beneficiaries, one hundred eight were targeted across the 12 city/municipal areas; the actual number of interviewees reached a total of one hundred fifteen.

f. One hundred eighteen<sup>16</sup> external stakeholders, e.g., NGAs, LGUs, CSOs

A total of three hundred sixty two persons were targeted for interview, but field work exceeded the targets (i.e., three hundred eighty six persons interviewed), as some extra persons (e.g., PAT members, regional staff, NCTSU staff and stakeholders) compensated for the inability to interview other targeted interviewees. Primary data collected from the structured KIIs and FGDs underwent thematic and content analyses. Documents were subjected to critical examination and factual evaluation. Qualitative and quantitative data used in this report included data from the DSWD administrative reporting systems, as well as other secondary data from DSWD.

**20. Due to resource constraints (particularly time and budget), select study areas throughout the country were visited for this study.** Twelve areas were initially identified by DSWD to be assessed for this process evaluation. These twelve areas may not necessarily be representative of the experience of DSWD operations and those of the beneficiaries for the three major social protection programs. However, the selection criteria for these study areas were formulated by DSWD in order to have a mixture of areas across the country. Further, the study areas had varied results from the SWDI assessment, and likely to have varying implementation experience of the three DSWD social protection programs.<sup>17</sup>

To effectively carry out the assessment, the PIDS examined security and logistics issues on the areas initially chosen by DSWD. The PIDS consequently suggested to DSWD staff the replacement of some study areas. The final twelve study areas visited are listed in Table 2.1.

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<sup>16</sup> For external stakeholders, the PIDS targeted to interview one hundred eight external stakeholders, and actually managed to interview a total of one hundred eighteen persons (much more than targeted).

<sup>17</sup> As per TOR of the Process Evaluation Study, regions per island cluster were selected by DSWD based on the following criteria: (a) these regions have implemented KC-NCDDP since 2012; (b) one region had largest improvements in SWDI, while the other region had the least improvement in the SWDI.

Municipalities and cities selected in the chosen regions were based on varied performance in the SWDI assessment, as well as other criteria. Selection criteria for municipalities per region: (a) Set 1 or 2 municipalities with three core Social Protection Programs (*Tatsulo* areas) being implemented; (b) Set 1 or 2 municipalities with three core Social Protection Programs (*Tatsulo* areas) being implemented with the highest improvement rate of level of well-being as of latest SWDI results; (c) Set 1 or 2 municipalities with three core Social Protection Programs (*Tatsulo* areas) being implemented with the lowest improvement rate of level of well-being as of latest SWDI results; (d) with organized Municipal Action Team (MAT); (e) with MAT members trained on Bridging Leadership Framework; (f) Set 1 or 2 municipalities which MAT has updated Municipal Action Plan (formerly City/Municipal Transition Plan).

**Table 2.1. Study Areas for Process Evaluation of DSWD Convergence Strategy.**

Study Areas			
Island Cluster	Regions	Province	Cities and Municipalities
Luzon	CAR	Benguet	La Trinidad
			Kibungan
	Region V	Albay	Jovellar
		Sorsogon	Donsol
Visayas	Region VII	Bohol	Pilar
			Jagna
	Region VIII	Northern Samar	Mondragon
		Samar	Motiong
Mindanao	Region IX	Zamboanga Del Sur	Lakewood
		Zamboanga Del Norte	Sibutad
	CARAGA	Agusan del Norte	Butuan City
		Surigao del Norte	Socorro

## 2.4. Evaluation Instruments and Data Collection

21. **Observations and insights of the different members of the DSWD operating units, are critical as they are the facilitators and implementers of the Convergence Strategy.** Thus, program implementors of KC-NCDDP, *Pantawid*, and SLP in the study areas were designed to be participants in either KIIs or FGDs to obtain information regarding the Convergence Strategy. Aside from implementors in the 12 study areas, beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the three programs were also asked to participate in FGDs to solicit other insights. KIIs and FGDs were guided by prepared instruments that were formulated based on discussions with DSWD CO staff, on guidelines issued by DSWD, and on other pertinent documents including relevant studies (e.g. ADB, 2015; Ballesteros *et al.*, 2016). Instruments for the KIIs and FGDs are shown as Annex 1 of this report.

22. **During the course of the field visits, supporting documents were also requested from each level of DSWD operating units.** To provide impartiality to the assessment, pertinent documents were scrutinized in relation to the DSWD *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) and other DSWD MCs regarding the implementation of the internal and external Convergence Strategy. During these visits, some challenging logistics issues<sup>18</sup> were encountered requiring the use of telephone interviews with DSWD regional officers and other field staff in place of face-to-face interviews.

<sup>18</sup> Some members of the PIDS study team experienced illnesses during the course of the fieldwork. Further, some of the DSWD officials at the regional level were unavailable for face-to-face interviews due to previous commitments.

## PART 3: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

23. **The processes for implementing the DSWD Convergence Strategy are examined in this report on three main topics: governance, business processes, as well as capacities.** These three main topics cover the 7S Framework suggested by DSWD as a framework for assessing internal and external convergence (Table 3.1). The various administrative levels of the DSWD organization have different roles and responsibilities. For the Convergence Strategy to work, a set of organizational structures, shared values and practical guidelines are needed at the National, Regional, Provincial, City/Municipal levels. Along with these, effective leadership (from the CO to the field), including the “**style**” in which key managers behave in achieving the organizational goals, and institutional culture (including accountability systems, “**shared values**” and “**structures**”) that provide the context for innovations in building working partnerships are important. Effective implementation of the Convergence Strategy also depends on the alignment of core business processes and “**systems**” (including resource and information management, including selection of beneficiaries as well as the management of critical gaps) so that these are supportive of the convergence “**strategy**”. Since coordination and collaboration require capacities and “**skills**” for managing complex institutional arrangements, institutional capacities and support for capacity development of “**staff**” (and skills gaps) are looked into. In consequence, the three topics covered in this report consider the 7S Framework.

**Table 3.1. Elements of 7S Framework**

1. Strategy	Internal and external convergence strategy
2. Structure	Organizational structures at the National, Regional, Provincial, City/Municipal levels
3. Systems Selection of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Listahanan, SWDI, PSA, community-based assessment</li> <li>• Reporting M&amp;E — Social Investigation, Social case monitoring</li> <li>• Capacity-building of action teams — Training/Workshop/Team-building Involvement of stakeholders</li> </ul>
4. Shared Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tatsulo convergence manual</li> <li>• Memorandum Circulars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No. 18 Series 2012 (Guidelines on Internal Convergence of the DSWD Core Social Protection Programs)</li> <li>○ No. 18 Series of 2015 (Creation of the Convergence Technical Support Unit)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. Style	Coordination Participation Incentive mechanisms
6. Staff	Public service Knowledge on convergence tools and strategy
7. Skills	Sense of ownership and Accountability Knowledge on convergence tools and strategy

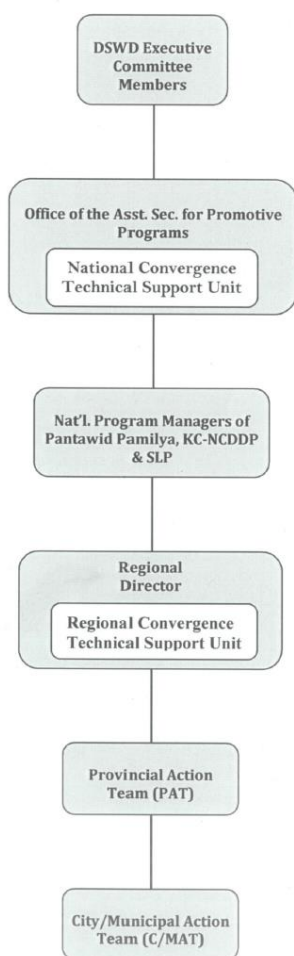
### 3.1. Governance

#### *a. Organizational Structures*

24. **While organizational structures at DSWD were defined at the onset for carrying out the Convergence Strategy, whatever changes in structures, nomenclatures and roles were not systematically documented.** The choice of structures for implementing any strategy or project critically depends on the lifetime of the initiative: short-term projects may rely on more informal structures, while long-term projects may need more strongly embedded systems, including organizational redesign. In 2010, the Department conceived of the Convergence Strategy and subsequently devised an organizational structure in the CO and in field offices at regional, provincial, and city/municipal levels to carry out the Convergence Strategy (*Tatsulo* Manual 2011, DSWD MC 18, Series of 2012; MC 14, Series of 2015). It has been observed that the *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) has neither been updated to reflect organizational dynamics at DSWD, nor included nomenclature changes in convergence structures. For instance, what the *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) refers to as the National Convergence Committee is now the Unified National Program Management Team (UNPMT), although this change was not explicitly suggested in the latest DSWD memorandum circular that defined organizational structures for convergence, viz., MC 14, Series of 2015. The MC seems to instead suggest an oversight function of the DSWD Execom over the NCTSU, in the overall National Convergence Structure (Figure 3.1), but even this was not explicitly stated in the MC. What the *Tatsulo* Manual (2011) also refers to as the Regional Convergence Committee, Provincial Convergence Committee and the Municipal Convergence Committee are now respectively called the Unified Regional Program Management Team (URPMT), the PAT and the C/MAT. DSWD websites have not been updated about organizational structures and responsibilities as they pertain to the Convergence Strategy. For instance, the following link

<https://transparency.dswd.gov.ph/organizational-structure/>

still describes organizational structures as of 2012. DSWD needs to conduct a stocktaking exercise on all the publicly-available information, as well as internal documents. These Arrangements can be confusing especially for staff who either recently join the programs or those who may be asked to take on responsibilities regarding the Convergence Strategy. There is also a need to be more specific about the roles of each member of convergence teams from the CO down to the field office. Discussions for some team members are long, but for others, they are either too terse, or absent.



**Figure 3.1. National Organization Structure for Convergence Strategy**

Source: MC 14, Series of 2015

25. **The DSWD has pursued minor restructuring internally to carry out the Convergence Strategy, and to address other organizational requirements of the Department for improved efficiency and effectiveness; however, over the years, some structures for convergence at the CO have weakened.** In particular, this is true in the case of re-clustered Offices, Bureaus, Services, and Units at the CO as noted in DSWD MC 01, Series of 2012 and its amendment MC 06, Series of 2012. These MCs put the national program management offices (NPMOs) of *Pantawid*, KC-NCDDP and SLP under the PRPB, which, in turn, is part of the Promotive Cluster of DSWD's Operations and Program (OPG)<sup>19</sup>. The PRPB, headed by a Bureau Director (Director IV), had a mandate for overseeing processes to ensure convergence of all efforts of the three social protection programs.

<sup>19</sup> Currently, OPG is composed of two clusters, the Promotive and the Protective Clusters.



From the time of its establishment, the PRPB has been structurally weakened, with its transformation into the CMO by virtue of DSWD Special Order, Series of 2014, and further into the NCTSU, by virtue of DSWD MC 14, Series of 2015. At the onset, the PRPB Director IV outranked the heads (Director III) of the three core social protection programs, and thus had convening power over them. Meetings of the National Action Team (NAT), headed by an Assistant Secretary of OPG's Promotive Programs and the PRPB Director, who respectively served as Chair and Vice Chair, were then held weekly. By 2013, the program heads were given a higher rank (Director IV) owing to the large portfolios they managed.

Unlike the PRPB head, the heads of CMO and NCTSU no longer have convening power over the national program managers of 4Ps, SLP and KC-NCDDP, which can be a challenge for coordination given the propensity for program offices to work in silos. However, the NCTSU head still regularly meets with these program managers, but at less frequency during quarterly meetings of the Promotive Cluster Committee Management chaired by the Undersecretary of the Promotive Programs of OPG. The Office of the Undersecretary, rather than the NCSTU, provides secretariat tasks for the Promotive Cluster meetings. In addition, between 2014 and 2015, the UNPMT chaired by the DSWD Secretary, has also reportedly been meeting every two months, although these UNPMT meetings are typically presided also by the Undersecretary of Promotive Programs.

The immediate successor to the PRPB, the CMO, was no longer headed by a Director IV but by a Director III. The NCTSU is headed currently by an official with a Director IV item, but in 2016, it was headed by a Division Chief, and even for a time, the NCTSU was functioning without a unit head. The current structures at the CO, suggest that the Convergence Strategy has not been prioritized in the CO compared to the inception period of the Convergence Strategy. Since convergence encompasses both promotive and protective programs, the NCTSU<sup>20</sup> has been suggesting a reversion to the level of an Office lodged with the Office of the Secretary but thus far, this proposal has not gained management approval. NPMOs suggest that hierarchy is secondary,

- 26. Coordination, which is important for convergence to take place, presumes that the units and people being coordinated would desire to be coordinated, but there are also reasons why programs work in silos.** Each of the three major social protection programs were designed for specific purposes, two of them have a household

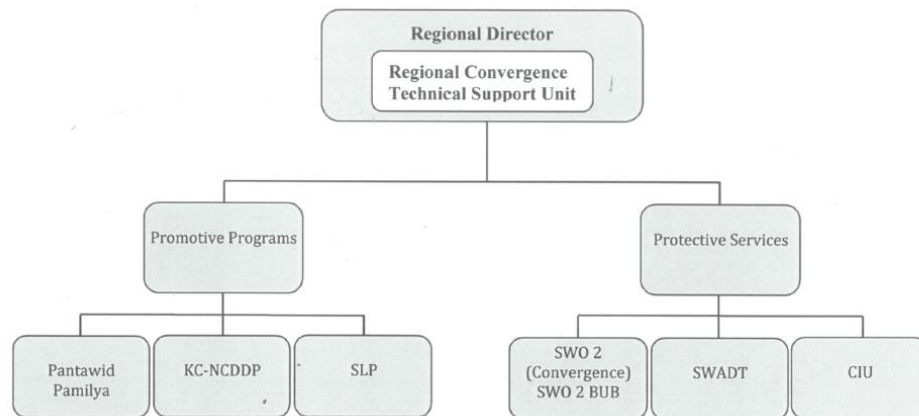
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<sup>20</sup> In the period 2012 up to 2015, the PRPB/CMO/NCTSU has been a part of the DSWD's Operations and Program (OPG), and has been reporting to an Assistant Secretary of OPG's Promotive Programs, except for instances when no there was no Assistant Secretary, in which case, it reported directly to the Undersecretary. In 2016, by virtue of Administrative Order (AO) 1 series of 2016, the NCTSU was officially lodged with the office of the Undersecretary of Promotive Programs of OPG.

focus, and the other a community focus. Their designs did not take into account the existence of the other programs. The need for convergence, however, sprung from the need to maximize use of resources and increase social impact for improving the welfare of DSWD program beneficiaries. The Convergence Strategy involves coordination not only within but also outside DSWD. Any coordination and collaboration involving both vertical and horizontal boundary-spanning must build structures around a clear understanding of where expertise, authority and competencies lie.

27. **At the regional level, the RCTSU is essential for carrying out the Convergence Strategy, but it is unclear if there are structures and mechanisms for regions to learn good practices from each other, and to cooperate with each other.** The RCC, assigned under the Office of the RD, provides main support to the RD in operationalizing and institutionalizing the Convergence Strategy (MC 14, Series of 2015). Giving support to the RCC in the RCTSU is the SWO-II for Convergence and Community Development Assistants (CDAs). However, these are not specifically documented in MC 14, Series of 2015. The RCTSU manages convergence at the regions and reports to the RD who leads the Unified Regional Project Management Team (URPMT) consisting of regional focal points for the three programs under the Promotive Programs Cluster, as well as representatives of Protective Services (Figure 3.2). The URPMT is implicitly indicated in MC 14, Series of 2015; however, the scope of responsibilities on convergence of the URPMT, and whether a specific action plan is required of them are not indicated in the MC. Meetings of the URPMT, reportedly done monthly, provide a mechanism for presenting program status reports, regional targets and accomplishments (in terms of allocation and utilization of funds), as well as provincial and municipal plans. In some regions, URPMT meetings also involve a review of proposals. These meetings are sometimes headed by the Assistant RD for Operations (ARDO) or Assistant RD for Administration (ARDA) and attended also by the Division Chief for Finance and focal persons of programs. The objectives of URPMT meetings include the following: monitor the performance status of project implementation and the operationalization of convergence at the regional, provincial, and municipal levels; identify critical areas, issues, and constraints in the operationalization of convergence; and, determine convergence initiatives. URPMT meetings are attended by representatives of the three core programs from the CO, RDs, Assistant RDs, Regional Project Coordinators (RPC) of the three core programs, PAT members, C/MAT leaders and the RCC who acts as secretariat. Issues and concerns at different levels are addressed during these meetings. Recent URPMT meetings serve as venues to discuss new directives and to show affirmation/appreciation of personnel. **A good practice for rewarding meritorious performance** in some URPMT meetings involves the **presentation of awards to Best C/MAT, Best PAT, and Best Convergence Initiatives**. While the directive to conduct URPMT is once a month,

some regions conduct their meetings quarterly. RCCs in these regions reported that doing so saves the personnel time and money.



**Figure 3.2. Organization Structure for Regional Convergence**

Source: MC 14, Series of 2015

The DSWD regional offices work on external convergence by fostering partnerships, especially during meetings of Regional Social Development Committee (RSDC) under the Regional Development Council. Members of RSDC are the same as the Regional Advisory Committee. In some regions, RSDC and RAC meetings are jointly held to discuss gaps in the implementation of the Strategy and formulate programs not only for 4Ps beneficiaries but for all the poor identified in the NHTS.

In addition, the RDCW is also conducted to enhance the collaboration among government agencies that work towards the welfare improvement of 4Ps beneficiaries. These NGAs include the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Health (DOH), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Interior and Local Governments (DILG), Department of Education (DepED), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The office of the RD in Cordillera Administrative Region closely works with six municipal LGUs to formulate programs for 4Ps beneficiaries. These six municipal LGUS have submitted their proposals and partner agencies committed to support the needs identified in the proposals.

The DSWD CO reported that Region III serves as a model field office (FO) in implementing provincial and municipal convergence. It is noteworthy that MC No. 3 series of 2015 was issued by the FO in Region III to operationalize MC No. 14 series

of 2015. This localized MC provided a clear operationalization of the Strategy from the region, province, cities and municipalities. At the Regional Office (III), the Assistant RD for Operations directly supervises the implementation of the Protective and Promotive Programs and Services while KC-NCDDP is under the Assistant RD for administration. This is a departure from the MC No. 14 series of 2015 where all three core programs are under the Promotive Programs. In addition, MC No. 3 series of 2015 provided clearer guidelines in leader selection. PAT leaders are designated by the RD and they come from the pool of Organic SWO IIs. C/MAT leaders should be contractual and are designated by the RD based on the recommendation of the PAT leaders. The guidelines are also clearer in terms of mechanisms for internal and external coordination and communication and in terms of consolidation and submission of reports. Evaluation of staff also puts more weights for convergence performance, compared to typical weights in the municipalities covered by the PIDS team. Further FO in Region III provided to the public various information dissemination regarding the Convergence Strategy even on social media (Figure 3.3). It is, unclear, however whether there are organizational arrangements and mechanisms for learning good practices across regions, and for the regions to cooperate with each other (aside from participation in planning activities coordinated by the CO).


**DSWD** FIELD OFFICE III  
Department of Social Welfare and Development

## CONVERGENCE STRATEGY

As leader in social welfare and development and social protection, we at the DSWD Field Office III have further strengthened our partnership with our intermediaries so that together we will be able to respond to the social risks confronting the vulnerable sectors faster with better programs, and smarter use of resources for improved outcomes of SWD services towards the empowerment of the poor, the disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors in the region for an improved quality of life.

### PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM

is a human development program of the national government that invests in the health and education of poor households, particularly of children aged 0-18 years old.

Patterned after the conditional cash transfer scheme implemented in other developing countries, the Pantawid Pamilya provides cash grants to beneficiaries provided that they comply with the set of conditions required by the program.





### KAPIT-BISIG LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN COMPREHENSIVE & INTEGRATED DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES

is one of the poverty alleviation programs of the Philippine Government being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). It uses the community-driven development (CDD) approach, a globally recognized strategy for achieving service delivery, poverty reduction, and good governance outcomes.

### SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM

a strategy to spread prosperity among communities in the Philippines, encouraging Listahanan-identified poor families, especially Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program members, to engage in resource-based and market-driven community micro-enterprises, or explore employment opportunities.

Each beneficiaries is given the opportunity to choose between the Micro-enterprise Development track or the Employment Facilitation track. SLP facilitates assistance to participants from organizing them into groups, until planning and monitoring their livelihood projects to ensure that they are self-sustaining.



To attend to the growing number of beneficiaries and boost the conduct of unified efforts needed in order to further combat the poverty issue, convergence strategy was introduced, the three (3) flagship programs, the convergence of Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS), the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), and Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program.

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dswdfo3

www.fo3.dswd.gov.ph


**Figure 3.3. Sample Dissemination on Convergence Strategy of FO 3**

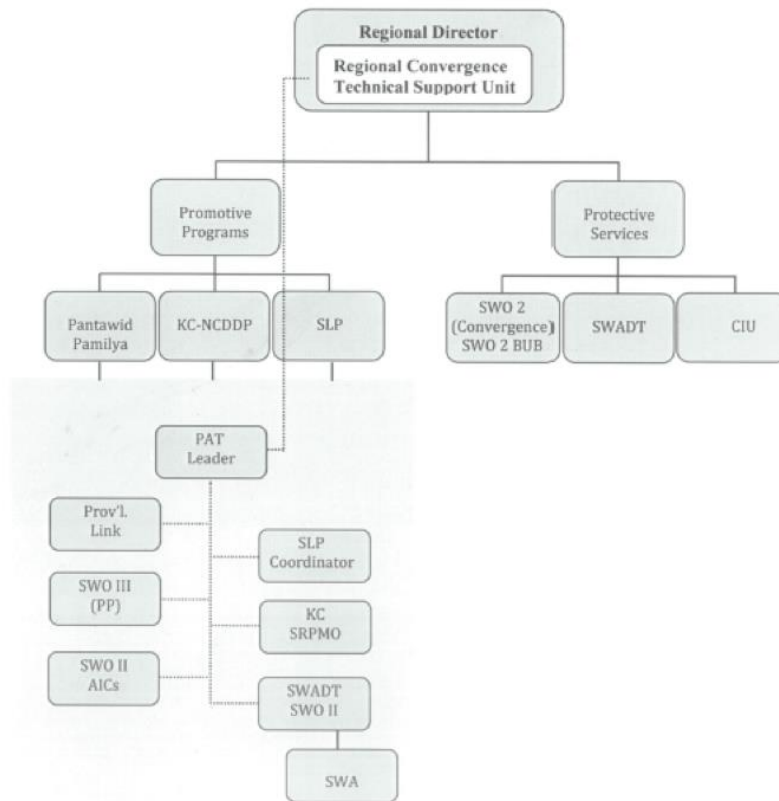
**Source:** <https://www.facebook.com/dswdfo3/posts/735540979903927>

28. At the provincial level, the PAT takes responsibility for Convergence and is supposed to provide technical assistance (TA) for the C/MATs, but the extent of this TA work also needs monitoring. As per MC 14, Series of 2015, the PAT is composed of all *Pantawid*, KC-NCDDP and SLP provincial staff, SWO II Organic, and an Administrative Assistant (Figure 3.4). The permanent SWO II is in-charge of the Department's programs, while SWO III is in-charge of convergence at the provincial level. The MC, however, does not clearly define the respective convergence responsibilities of all team members, nor even those of the leaders, but only of selected

members of the sub-national action teams. The PAT reportedly meets every two months monthly to discuss issues and concerns of the PAT and C/MATs in the province. While all implementors at the provincial level are PAT members, PAT meetings though are attended only by those who are needed. The PAT's main role is to provide TA to the C/MAT. As coach monitors of convergence implementation, the PAT reviews the City/Municipality Action Plans (C/MAPs), monitors the status of Strategic Goals, and assists in the C/MAT's presentations during meetings of the *Pantawid* Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) or the KC-NCDDP Municipal Inter-Agency Committee (MIAC). The specific tasks on TA by the PAT though are unclear and need monitoring.

29. **Assisting the PAT and C/MAT leaders are the Social Welfare Officers II-Convergence (SWCs) who closely work with SWO III to ensure that convergence is taking place at the municipal and provincial levels.** The SWC's role in internal convergence is to ensure that C/MATs are functional, i.e., having a team brand, mission/vision, convergence initiative/convergence advocacy, and C/MAP. The SWC, who holds the same rank as the *Pantawid* Municipal Link, assists in crafting the C/MAP as well. In addition, the SWC consolidates convergence reports on such matters as the C/MAP, C/MAT functionality, and SWDI results, and submits these reports to the RCC (and RD). The SWC's role in external convergence is to discuss in MAC/MIAC meetings the SWDI results and the possible interventions that stakeholders can commit to pursue. It appears that the SWC serves as secretariat to the URPM, aside from providing TA to the CMAT, and assisting in the presentations in MAC/MIAC meetings. While the SWC is supposed to be under the PAT as per MC14, Series of 2015, yet, in practice, the SWC also reports to the RD. The extent of their responsibilities though is not fully documented.

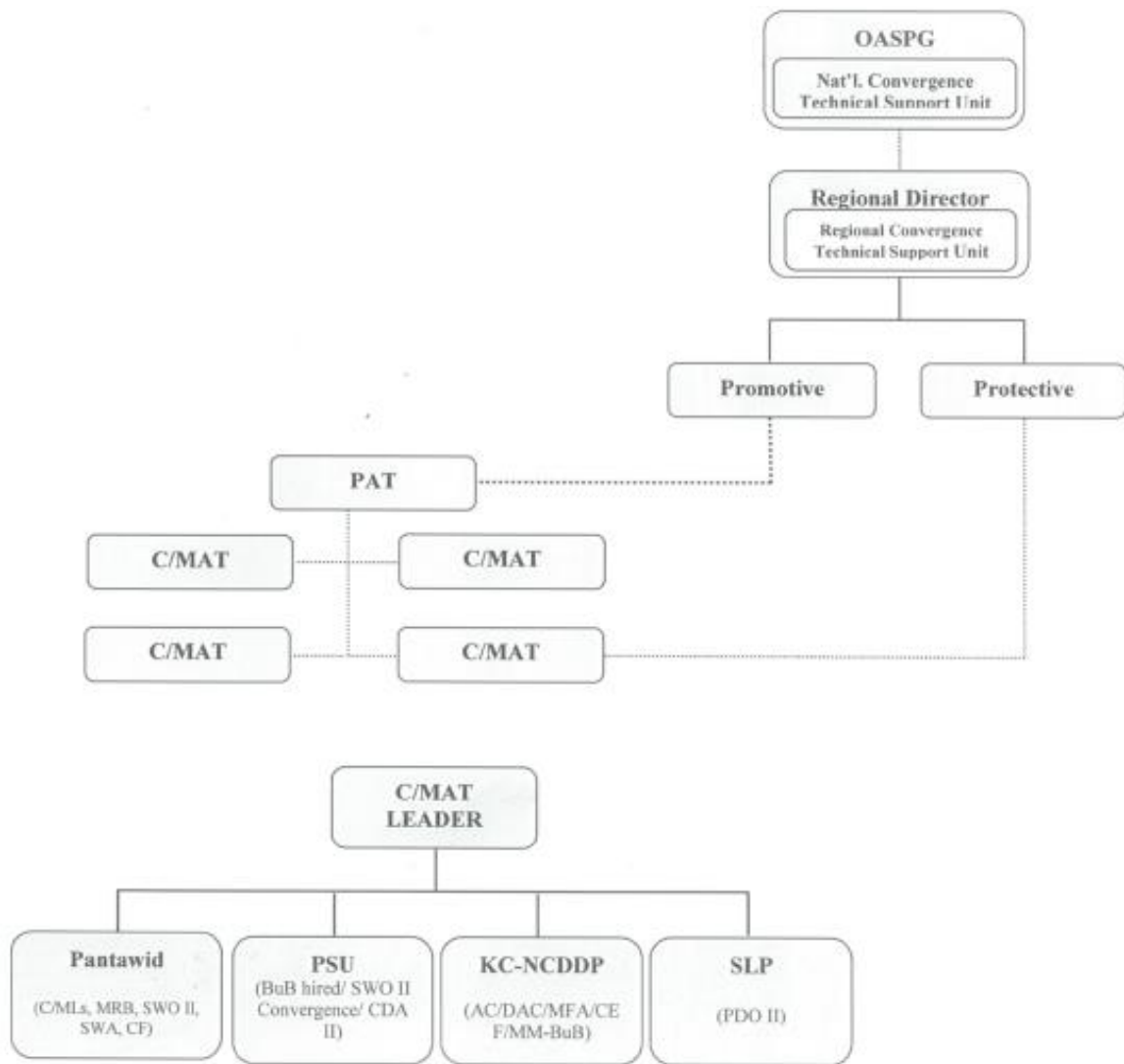
In some regions, e.g., Bicol, Eastern Visayas, and Cordillera Administrative Region, where there are big BUB projects, some SWCs and Community Development Assistants are designated in C/MATs. The SWC also serves as the PAT secretariat and coordinates meetings among relevant personnel. In some provinces where BUB project implementation has ended, the SWC is tasked to monitor the remaining BUB tasks, such as release of checks and submission of reports. In Western Samar, the SWC maintains an open-line system (i.e., a web-based application of BUB used to update project status) while in Zamboanga Del Norte, the SWC also provides orientation on convergence for new local chief executives (LCEs).



**Figure 3.4. Organization Structure for Provincial Convergence**

Source: MC 14, Series of 2015

30. **The main actors for Convergence at the city/municipal level are the C/MATs, and in most cases the teams appear to be working well.** The C/MAT is composed of *Pantawid* City/Municipal Link, SLP-Project Development Officer (PDO), KC-NCDDP-Area Coordinator and Deputy Area Coordinator, Community Facilitator, Municipal Finance Analysts, Municipal Monitors, Municipal Roving Bookkeeper, SWC and all DSWD Program Staff at the City/Municipal level (Figure 3.5). In other provinces, personnel for Modified Conditional Cash Transfer are also designated in the C/MAT to oversee *Pantawid* in a Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Area (GIDA) and for specific sectors like the indigenous people and the homeless. The C/MAT oversees the complementation, synchronization, and harmonization of the activities and resources of the three core programs. The action team also leads in engaging stakeholders to ensure that necessary interventions are provided to beneficiaries. The action team holds meetings monthly, and as the need arises. Agenda of C/MAT meetings include program accomplishments, reiteration of personnel/program responsibilities, and gaps that are yet to be served.



**Figure 3.5. Organization Structure for City/Municipal Convergence**

Source: MC 14, Series of 2015

### ***b. Leadership***

31. **While problems in coordination may be facilitated by organizational structures, their solution also require other means, such as capable and inspiring leadership, qualified staff, and a culture driven by dedication and hard work, and shared values.** Thus, even if organizational arrangements, roles and responsibilities are identified and satisfied, these should not be overrated as means to implement convergence and organizational structures. Leaders from the CO to the field are enormously important in defining the business process and culture of the DSWD, and in providing intellectual, ethical and inspiring leadership to the convergence teams. Although convergence as practiced can evolve because of the different styles and focus of leaders across the entire DSWD bureaucracy for achieving the organizational goals,



there ought to be some constant directions given to DSWD staff, particularly on what the end goals of social protection, and on the means for achieving these goals. For instance, regardless of leadership, the SWDI should regularly conduct examination of the welfare conditions of DSWD project beneficiaries. While there could be changes in the indicators across time because of the differences in thrusts of leadership, (the immediate past Secretary preferred to increase the role of community building), this should not have precluded the regular conduct of the SWDI, whether every year, or every two years, since updated information base of the SWDI is a vital input to the action plans in the field.

32. **There is general consensus that PAT leaders should be permanent/organic personnel of the Department, but PAT leaders come from the three core programs while permanent/organic personnel handle other DSWD programs under the Protective Services Unit (PSU).** As per MC-14 Series of 2015, PAT leaders should be designated Team Leaders by the RDs, and they have several convergence tasks. They synchronize schedules of activities and set deadlines of deliverables; coordinate with the provincial government for possible resource augmentation; tap other government agencies to provide interventions that the core programs could not address; and, lead in the analysis of C/MAP and C/MAT's functionality. As mentioned earlier, some PAT leaders who handle KC-NCDDP in areas that no longer have KC-NCDDP personnel reported that it is challenging to perform their tasks as PAT leaders and as KC-NCDDP implementers.
33. **While PATs members know that their leaders should be selected (and designated by the RD) every year, they mentioned several issues on the leadership selection process during interviews.** Firstly, some PATs choose leaders not through election but through lottery. Since PATs are mostly composed of *Pantawid* staff, PAT members tend to vote by program. KC-NCDDP staff find this selection system unfair. Secondly, **the issue of continuity is more pronounced when the PAT leader is the KC-NCDDP focal person** since these personnel are MOA workers with uncertainty on the duration of their engagement. Some PAT leaders noted that PAT leaders should be organic personnel since high turnover and uncertainty of tenure may hamper continuity of the Convergence Strategy. Finally, PAT members mention that **the duration of PAT leadership should be more than one year.** Turnover of files takes time and so does planning. One year of leadership is not enough to implement plans at the provincial level.
34. **Leadership in the C/MAT can be challenging, but C/MAT leaders generally get a lot of support from their team members.** Some C/MAT leaders noted that leading the team can be a challenge since the Municipal Link, SLP-PDO, and KC are of the same rank, and thus, delegating tasks can be difficult. All C/MAT leaders point out that

while MC 18, series of 2012, suggested that C/MAT leaders should be rotated, this did not get operationalized as the then PRPB did not provide guidelines about rotation. To provide some incentive for being C/MAT leaders, they were given slots in the Leadership for Convergence Training Program (LCTP) which helped harness their leadership skills. Some of the C/MAT leaders point out the importance of giving this kind of seminars to other team members, especially if there will be leadership rotation, or some new leader takes over from movements, resignation of C/MAT leaders. Others outside the C/MAT, e.g., at the PAT, also hoped to participate in the LCTP. The C/MAT leaders were generally very appreciative of the LCTP. Some C/MAT leaders from municipalities where C/MATs were recently established find age composition of the C/MAT members to be a challenge, as they consider the younger members to be more difficult to lead. Leadership is partly challenging because while members know that there are advances to convergence, there are also burdens for their work arising from convergence. Several of the SLP-PDO and SWC admitted that they find their tasks more challenging compared to when the Convergence Strategy was not yet in place.

- 35. The understanding of C/MAT members on how their C/MAT leaders are selected varies.** Some C/MAT members claimed that a leader should have at least a year serving in a program and is chosen by the members. While some claimed that an existing memo specifically states that leaders should be social workers, others claimed that leaders should have supervisory experience and therefore leadership should be given to KC-NCDDP. In one municipality, C/MAT leader designated by the RD was a social worker as the regional office prioritized social workers. In another municipality, KC-NCDDP area coordinator was selected as the C/MAT leader because the area was granted three cycles of KC-NCDDP projects. Further, the KC-NCDDP area coordinator has leadership responsibilities in the KC-NCDD.
- 36. Most C/MAT leaders have been leaders since the C/MATs were formed.** On one hand, this benefits the Strategy because leaders have likely evolved with convergence efforts and the implementation of activities for the Convergence Strategy becomes easier over time. On the other hand, this can also put the continuity of the Strategy at serious risk as the C/MAT becomes personality-oriented and there are difficulties encountered when these leaders resign from DSWD or move out from their area. Some C/MAT members have expressed the desirability of leadership rotation. However, KC-NCDDP personnel noted that their program has many modalities and they need to ensure that deliverables with specific timelines are handled as expected and being a C/MAT leader entails additional workload that can distract from the deliverables.
- 37. Some C/MAT leaders report that convergence is hardly practiced at the provincial and regional levels.**

- One regional office is reported to be managed very bureaucratically with hardly any innovation for service delivery. As a result, issues and concerns are sometimes not addressed as they get lost in the hierarchy. The centralized processing of documents and the lack of financial management innovations contribute to the bottlenecks in implementing the Convergence Strategy. One SLP-PDO even reported that the slow processing of proposals in the regional office has stalled the implementation of his projects.
- In some regions, programmatic timelines coming from the Regional Office overlap and RPCs of the three programs work in silos. In consequence, field personnel submit their programmatic deliverables much ahead of whatever convergence deliverables.
- While the PAT should be providing technical assistance to the C/MAT as per MC 15, Series of 2015, several C/MAT teams have reported being given more TA/guidance on their work though by the RCCs, and not the PAT.
- Some C/MATs do not even feel the presence of either the PAT and RCC. In some municipalities, the C/MAT has reportedly only seen the SWC and RCC twice (once during the payout and another during the PIDS assessment) during the past year. The lack of field visits by RCCs and the PAT affects how C/MAT members perceive convergence.
- Some C/MAT leaders reported that they lack coaching and TA support from PAT leaders and some SWCs noted that C/MAT activities lack regional support.

**38. Some C/MAT leaders have good innovative practices in leading their teams.**

- In one municipality, the **C/MAT leader replicates** the activities of the LCTP training for the benefit of the **C/MAT members** and the outputs of the action team are submitted to the LCTP facilitator.
- In another municipality, the **C/MAT leader shares leadership role and assigns a C/MAT member to become assistant leader** each month.

***c. Recommendations***

- 39. DSWD should take stock of various documents**, particularly the *Tatsulo Operations Manual* (2011) and various MCs, **and should work toward updating the Operations Manual of the Convergence Strategy**. Documentation should pay attention to details consistent with the organizational structures, provide more specific guidelines on who does what, and, what specific office/unit/leader has oversight functions. The role of every team member identified in the national, regional, provincial and city/municipal convergence structures should be described.

40. **DSWD ought to increase the coordinative function of NCTSU in the national convergence structure by giving it more prominence.** While it is understandably difficult to provide resources for the NCTSU since the Convergence Strategy is not a program, the current structure of NCTSU and its context do not provide serious credibility in mainstreaming the Convergence Strategy. The NCTSU staff do not currently provide secretariat functions to the Promotive Cluster meetings, while the NCTSU Director has no convening power over the program heads and these deserve to be addressed. While the Assistant Secretary or the Undersecretary for the Promotive Secretary already has convening power over the programs (and the NCTSU), and the Secretary, in turn, has oversight over the Undersecretary, it would have been more consistent to have the Assistant Secretary become the head of the NCTSU, or transfer the NCTSU directly under the supervision of the Secretary. The latter sends a clear message that the Convergence Strategy should be mainstreamed not only in the three main social protection programs but throughout all social services of the Department. There are, for instance, other DSWD programs such as Social Pension that are expanding in terms of coverage, and yet systems developed are independent and may not be learning from lessons in operations, especially in the three main social protection programs. Understandably, there is resistance from the DSWD programs especially at the CO to converge operations given the tendency to work in siloes, but this needs correction in order for services to become more effective and efficient. There is also some structural inconsistency in having the NCTSU headed by someone of the same rank as the program managers since he/she has to meet with program managers through meetings convened by the Assistant Secretary (or the Undersecretary). In the C/MAT and PAT, a team leader is expected to be first among equals, and yet to provide strong direction and have some convening power over the other team members. While leadership in the C/MAT and PAT is bound by more constraints, leadership issue at the CO could be easier to address.
41. **Field personnel who are willing to take on additional leadership responsibilities should be given not only accountabilities but also some rewards especially for satisfactory and moreso meritorious performance.** Some C/MAT members reported that they were hesitant to become C/MAT leaders because of the added burden to their already challenging responsibilities. Given this mindset, people stepping up to leadership should be incentivized by at least having lower caseloads to compensate for increased responsibilities in spearheading convergence initiatives, monitoring, and unifying databases across programs.
42. **Leadership at the national, regional and provincial levels will need to make bigger efforts on external convergence.** Most people interviewed tend to say that convergence is practiced in the city/municipal level, but not necessarily above this level. Ultimately, leadership inspires people in an organization. It helps staff to see

their leaders networking and having strong partnerships with leaders of other national government agencies, to provide evidence that convergence is not only practiced at the city/municipal level. More institutional arrangements will also be required to ensure ownership of the C/MAPs not only by the C/MATs but also by all DSWD partners, especially the LGUs.

### **3.2. Business Processes**

43. **Aside from organizational structure and effective leadership, the implementation of the Convergence Strategy also depends on aligning business processes to aid the coordination, collaboration, and complementation of efforts, programs, and services.** Important business processes include implementation planning, resource management, as well as M&E. The discussion on implementation planning is directed towards the SWDI, action plans, and functionality assessments. As regards resource management, attention is on issues pertaining to caseloads, travel expenses, and office supplies. Discussions on M&E is focused on reporting procedure/information management system and performance management system. Some observations of critical gaps in the implementation of the three core social protection programs of the Department, with corresponding recommendations are provided in the Annex.

#### ***a. Implementation planning***

44. **Identified gaps based on SWDI results are used by the three core programs in crafting interventions, which are detailed in the C/MAP.** The SWDI, successor of the Social Welfare Indicators, is the main case management tool that guide the C/MAT in formulating the C/MAP. The SWDI tool, based on 23 indicators (4 of them measuring economic sufficiency, while the remaining 19 measure social adequacy), is used to evaluate the conditions and needs of beneficiaries and to monitor welfare changes resulting from the collaboration of internal and external stakeholders. Three welfare levels are monitored in the SWDI: (i) survival or the level below poverty threshold, (ii) subsistence or the level where beneficiaries have means to address basic needs like food and shelter, and (iii) self-sufficiency or the level where beneficiaries can provide for themselves without assistance from the Programs. Further, the SWDI assessment tool makes use of SLP rider questions on the skills that family members currently have and the skills they are willing to acquire. In addition to these, KC rider questions are noted on the awareness of respondents on KC-NCDDP, participation of family members to KC-NCDDP activities for the past 12 months, and, KC-NCDDP sub-projects that the household benefitted from in the past 12 months. The projects/activities of *Pantawid* and SLP are dictated by the SWDI results. On the other hand, the community decides which projects should be funded by the KC-NCDDP. If

the SWDI is conducted prior to Participatory Situation Analysis (PSA)<sup>21</sup> or Social Investigation<sup>22</sup> (SI), SWDI results can be used as a reference off PSA/SI.

45. **Identified gaps in welfare sourced from the SWDI are presented in MAC and MIAC meetings, which are presided by the LCE, and attended by partner NGAs, CSOs, among other stakeholders.** During MAC meetings, two-way feedback is established, with the Department presenting possible interventions that stakeholders can provide, and stakeholders pointing out what needs to be provided. In addition, stakeholders commit to addressing the gaps that the three core programs could not address. Stakeholders' commitments are included in the C/MAP. There are also MIAC meetings where KC-NCDDP concerns are discussed. In some municipalities, MAC and MIAC meetings are conducted separately while in others, they are conducted jointly. Why MAC and MIAC continue to separately exist is a puzzle if the Department is working on convergence of the three core programs.
46. **While SWDI is a data-driven tool to assess the needs and to identify gaps and interventions, it also needs to be complemented with other methods such as feasibility studies, immersion, and consultation.** This is highlighted in the case of municipalities where enterprises were unsuccessful. From the information gathered in KIIs and FGDs, the SLP provides training courses/programs to those who are in the survival level, and seed capital to those who are in the subsistence level. The mapping of services to the welfare level of beneficiaries (based on the SWDI) should ensure that seed capital will be used for its intended purpose. However, in most municipalities visited, SLP-PDOs reported that the failure of enterprises was largely due to the use of funds by beneficiaries for addressing their daily needs instead of their intended purposes to support entrepreneurial activities. Some livelihood projects were also reported to have failed due to deaths of livestock. Other livelihood projects have yet to realize profits. Those that have seen material outputs have encountered market-related

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<sup>21</sup> Participatory Situation Analysis is a process in KC-NCDDP where community volunteers undertake research on the community that identifies determinants of poverty in the community, and provides a range of possible options for addressing these issues.

<sup>22</sup> Social Investigation is a method founded on different techniques for collection and processing of data for the diagnosis of the social situation and economic status of persons, families, or communities. The Social Investigation is meant to determine and/or validate the needs and concerns of the target communities, and identify political and economic dynamics in the area that may either facilitate or hinder attainment of program goals. For KC-NCDDP, as per Tatsulo (2012), data sources for the Social Investigation include : (a) the National Household Targeting System – for Poverty Reduction; (b) Locally generated data such as Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP); Annual Investment Program (AIP); Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and Community-based Monitoring System; (c) Barangay/LGU profile (using consolidated format of all three community profiles of (the three DSWD core social protection programs) (d) Interviews of households and key stakeholders (e.g. barangay officials, sectoral leaders, and other active residents in the area). Descriptions of the AIP, CDP and CLUP, are given in Footnote No. 18. of this report.

problems. These indicate the need to supplement SWDI with qualitative assessments including feasibility and marketing studies, immersion, and consultations. Further, there ought to be more stringent control mechanisms to ensure that beneficiaries are making use of the financial support provided to them for the intended purposes; otherwise, expected welfare changes from SLP interventions will not result.

47. **In some municipalities, orientation on the availability and required use of SWDI for convergence is inadequate.** Some new SLP-PDOs, in particular, were not aware that SLP livelihood/training programs should address identified welfare gaps on survival and subsistence levels revealed by the SWDI results.
48. **Municipal LGUs use data from various assessment methods such as *Listahanan*, SWDI results, or CBMS data in formulating their Executive Legislative Agenda (ELA)<sup>23</sup> and/or Annual Investment Plan (AIP)<sup>24</sup>.** Around 80% of beneficiaries from municipal LGU-led projects are 4Ps while the remaining 20% are selected through on-site assessments in collaboration with C/MATs. Some PAT leaders, however, reported political issues behind selection of areas for intervention with municipal LGUs prioritizing areas of their allies.
49. **While the SWDI and the Core Local Poverty Indicators (CLPI) do not fully match, they have a high level of compatibility.** The KC-NCDDP's PSA makes use of the CLPI, that can be sourced usually from a Community-based Monitoring System (CBMS), or the DSWD's NHTS-PR. The latter, also called *Listahanan*, is a system used by DSWD to identify poor households based on proxy indicators of income for targeting beneficiaries of *Pantawid*. A comparison of the 2015 SWDI and the CLPI (Table 3.2) shows a rather high level of compatibility between the SWDI and the CLPI.

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<sup>23</sup> The Executive-Legislative Agenda is a planning document that embodies the strategic directions of the LGU during the term of office of its elected officials. It is mutually developed and agreed upon by both the executive and legislative departments of an LGU. It is an integrated plan that contains the major development thrusts and priorities of both the executive and legislative branches towards a common vision for the locality (PH-CA LGSP, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> The AIP, together with the CLUP, the CDP and the Local Development Investment Program (LDIP), are four plans required of LGUs by the DILG and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

"The LGU vision serves as the basis for all planning efforts in the locality. This vision is translated in the form of a CLUP, a long-term plan which lays out the development directions that also defines the physical pattern of growth for the locality for at least 10 years. Ideally, all other plans should be consistent with the CLUP to ensure continuity, rationality and stability in local development efforts down through the generations. Medium-term plans such as the CDP, usually ranging from three to six years, are prepared to concretize the LGU vision. The LDIP, on the other hand, defines the investment program of the LGU for three years and is ideally derived from the CDP. The CDP and the LDIP have timeframes not necessarily tied up with the LCE's term of office. The AIP defines the priority programs and projects of the LGU that will be financed through its 20 percent Development Fund." (PH-CA LGSP, 2004)

**Table 3.2. Comparison of SWDI and CLPI**

SWDI indicators	CLPI indicators
<b>Economic Sufficiency</b>	
Employment	Employment
<i>Working status of family members at least 18 yo</i>	<i>Unemployment rate</i>
Employable Skills	None
<i>Occupational skills of family members at least 18 yo</i>	
Income	Income
<i>Family monthly per capita income for the past 6 months</i>	<i>Proportion of households with income less than the poverty threshold</i>
	<i>Proportion of households with income less than the food threshold</i>
	<i>Proportion of households who eat less than 3 meals a day</i>
Social Insurance	None
<i>Membership or access of family to formal financial institutions</i>	
<b>Social Adequacy</b>	
None	<b>Peace and Order</b>
Health	Health
<i>Availment of family members of health services (past 6 months)</i>	
<i>Health conditions of family members (past 6 months)</i>	<i>Proportion of children 0-5 yo who died to the total number of children 0-5 yo</i>
Nutrition	Nutrition
<i>Number of meals the family had in a day</i>	
<i>Nutritional status of children at most 5 yo</i>	<i>Malnutrition prevalence of children aged 0-5 yo</i>
Water and Sanitation	Water and Sanitation
<i>Access to safe drinking water</i>	<i>Proportion of households without access to safe drinking water</i>
<i>Access to sanitary toilet facilities</i>	<i>Proportion of households without access to sanitary toilet facilities</i>
<i>Garbage disposal practice</i>	
Housing/Living Conditions	Shelter
<i>Roof materials</i>	<i>Proportion of households living in makeshift housing</i>
<i>Outer wall materials</i>	
<i>Tenure status of housing unit</i>	<i>Proportion of households who are squatting</i>
<i>Lighting facility</i>	
Education	Education
<i>Functional literacy of members at least 10 yo</i>	<i>Elementary participation rate</i>
<i>School enrollment of children 3-17 yo</i>	<i>Secondary participation rate</i>
Family Activities	None
Role Performance of Household Members	None

**Source:** SWDI 2015 and DILG MC 2003-92.

**Note:** Fonts in **red**: domain/indicator which does not have a counterpart in the SWDI.

One C/MAT member observed that data collection for CLPI is at the aggregate level and many of these community indicators can actually be retrieved from the SWDI results. Some C/MAT leaders noted that aggregate community statistics from the SWDI provide a portrait of the community, but these SWDI-based statistics do not always give a complete picture as they do not reflect the quality of infrastructure in the community. For example, there are some communities where there may be drinking facilities, but these facilities have not been tested for safety.



50. ***Pantawid* makes use of Social Case Management while KC-NCDDP uses PSA/SI as programmatic tools.** While 4Ps personnel have specific intervention for every beneficiary, special cases like victims of rape or violence against women and children (VAWC), child labor, and chronic absenteeism, are prioritized. Interventions coming from the SLP are dictated by SWDI results. Recipients of SLP livelihood/training projects include 4Ps and non-4Ps, with the former prioritized and accounting for most of the SLP beneficiaries. For SLP, those in the subsistence level are provided capital seeds while those in the survival level are provided training courses to make them more employable or to improve their entrepreneurial skills. SLP beneficiaries can participate in several training courses/programs. KC-NCDDP makes use of PSA, SI and *barangay* profiling, which involves an examination of the CLPI, for identifying the needs of the community and the number of households that will benefit from specific interventions. Some criteria used to prioritize projects include the magnitude of the problem to be addressed, number of beneficiaries, and environmental impact. Projects that do not get funded by KC-NCDDP are lobbied to be included in the BUB, in the municipal budgets, or in the AIP/ELA, or endorsed to other NGAs or the private sector for funding. There are, however, reports of municipalities that have Accelerated Community Empowerment Activity Cycle, with projects did not undergo PSA.

51. **Action plans are essential tools for convergence of efforts in building resilience among beneficiaries.** At the city/municipal level, the C/MAP, which is the successor of the City/Municipal Transition Plan<sup>25</sup>, outlines a comprehensive set of interventions (projects, programs, services and activities) offered by DSWD and by stakeholders to help 4Ps beneficiaries and communities move away from survival to self-sufficiency level (Formulation and Implementation of C/MAP Manual, 2015). As such, the C/MAP is a tool not just for convergence but also for means of implementation (resource mobilization, accountability and transparency, advocacy and communication) and for ensuring outcomes (including disaster risks reduction and preparedness). The C/MPAP defines the stakeholders responsible for the interventions, programs, and projects. It directs all internal and external stakeholders to the complementation of their services to avoid inefficient use of resources.

52. **The C/MAPs are crafted largely using SWDI results firstly by the C/MATs and subsequently updated every month during the C/MAT meetings, as well as during MAC meetings, the latter of which is held every two months.** As pointed out in Paqueo *et al.* (2014), a major strength of the action plans is its being data driven. The SWDI, however, is not regularly conducted. For periods when no SWDI is conducted,

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<sup>25</sup> The City/Municipal Transition Plans were formulated initially for LGUs with the first batch of *Pantawid* beneficiaries who were “graduating” or exiting from the CCT. See, e.g., Paqueo et al. (2014).

C/MATs use other tools such as the CBMS and PSA to continue the crafting of evidence-based interventions. These action plans contain matrices of actionable indicators (from SWDI results), identified gaps on survival or subsistence levels, and interventions/projects (including the responsible government unit –whether LGU or NGA – or private sector partner such as CSOs). During C/MAT and MAC meetings, accomplishments relative to the targets of every program are reported and commitments that are served and yet to be served are presented. Gaps that are not served in the previous year are planned to be addressed the following year.

53. **The C/MAP is linked with the ELA/AIP so that LGUs can take joint ownership of the plans to ensure that local interventions are implemented and funded.** In some municipalities, the estimated budget of C/MAP is submitted to municipal LGUs through the Municipal Social Welfare Development Office for inclusion in the AIP. In others, however, the C/MAT does not participate in the formulation of the AIP/ELA. Some C/MATs are reported to have difficulties making LCEs commit to addressing the identified gaps in the C/MAP. Some C/MAT leaders are members of Local Poverty Reduction Action Teams (LPRAT), but others are not. Some C/MAT leaders noted that while the LPRATs have generated their Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs), the process of identifying projects in the LRAPs are not systematic. Some CSOs in the LGUs cater to specific sectors, which are not necessarily the poor and vulnerable. The DSWD will need to have an institutional arrangement with the DILG for the participation of all C/MAT leaders into the LPRATs, and for the LPRAPs to also have synergy with the C/MAPs, in fulfillment of external convergence. Internally, the DSWD will also need to consolidate the MACs and MIACs though these were mechanisms designed specifically for the 4Ps and KC-NCDDP. At the end of each year, an assessment of the implementation of the CMAPs is undertaken, including a review and evaluation of the extent of external convergence. This will provide a documentation of good practices toward an updating of the C/MAPs.
54. **In terms of content, the C/MAP must have clearly defined objectives and results, a Project Implementation Plan (PIP), and a coherent narrative (2015 Formulation of the C/MAP manual).** Objectives define the overarching goals for the 4Ps beneficiaries (e.g. raise 250 households from survival to subsistence); the intended results (e.g. address high unemployment rate); and, details on how broad objectives are to be achieved. The PIP lists specific interventions and planned actions including the outcomes, time frame, responsible stakeholders, and means of verification. The narrative articulates the current state of development in the community that provides the context in which interventions are to be delivered. The PIP is an element present in four C/MAPs that were made available to the PIDS research team (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3. Comparison of 2016 C/MAP of some municipalities**

Municipality	Elements of C/MAP	Remarks
A	• Objectives/Results	• <b>None</b>
	• PIP	• Identified gaps for survival and subsistence; Listed projects and responsible partner agencies No timelines No means of verification <b>Signed by C/MAT members (???)</b>
	• Narrative	• Articulated the baseline and target households/family members in survival and subsistence levels that need interventions in all actionable indicators.
B	• Objectives/Results	• Goal: to raise the level of well-being of 25 HH from survival to subsistence; 117 HH subsistence to self-sufficiency
	• PIP	• Identified gaps and target households for survival and subsistence; Listed projects, responsible partner agencies and responsible programs; With timelines No means of verification Signed by C/MAT members
	• Narrative	• Articulated the baseline and target households/family members in survival and subsistence levels that need interventions in all actionable indicators.
C	• Objectives/Results	• Goal: to raise the level of well-being of 2549 HH from survival to self-sufficiency in collaboration with the LGU, CSOs, POs, and NGAs
	• PIP	• Identified gaps and target households for survival and subsistence; Listed projects, responsible partner agencies and responsible programs; With timelines No means of verification Signed by MWSDO, MNAO, MPDC, Budget Officer, and Mayor
	• Narrative	• Articulated the baseline and target households/family members in survival and subsistence levels that need interventions in all actionable indicators in codes (eg. L1-#, L2-#)
D	• Objectives/Results	• Goal: to raise the level of well-being of 20 HH from survival to subsistence: 2800 HH from subsistence to self-sufficiency by the end of December 2016.
	• PIP	• Identified gaps and target households for survival and subsistence; Listed projects, responsible partner agencies and responsible programs; With timelines No means of verification Signed by CMAT members
	• Narrative	• Articulated the baseline and target households/family members in survival and subsistence levels that need interventions in all actionable indicators in codes (e.g. L1-#, L2-#)

In these four C/MAPs, the gaps and targets are listed and interventions of partner stakeholders and responsible DSWD programs are identified. However, there are some municipalities where interventions do not have timelines.

All four C/MAPs do not have any means of verification and all have identified the baseline and target households in survival and subsistence levels that need interventions in given actionable indicators, which are presented in a log frame format. While some municipalities have used a short narrative to articulate needs and present baseline and target data, others have used codes (e.g. L1-#, L2-#). The signatories of most of these C/MAPs are C/MAT leaders and members. Only one out of the four was signed by the LCE and LGU officials. **Having LCE and LGU officials sign the C/MAP is a good practice** to ensure ownership of the C/MAP.

55. **During MAC/MIAC meetings, identified gaps are presented to enlist the help of stakeholders for crafting appropriate interventions and for obtaining firm commitments so that the identified gaps are addressed.** During these meetings, stakeholders can also point out interventions that are necessary but are not yet included in the action plan.
56. **While crafting the C/MAP involves a two-way feedback between internal and external stakeholders, there are still some challenges.** In some municipalities, representatives of the LCE and representatives of heads of partner agencies attend MAC/MIAC meetings; however, since these representatives could not commit on behalf of the LCE/heads their attendance lead to implementation bottlenecks. In one province, only one out of nine municipalities had submitted a hard copy of the C/MAP to the PAT due to the resignation of personnel. In most MAC/MIAC, business communities are rarely involved.
57. **Convergence processes for the 4Ps and SLP appear to be generally working as both are household-based interventions.** C/MAT leaders reported that SLP initiatives are based on SWDI results and the C/MAP, and that the training for SLP typically involves many 4Ps beneficiaries. SLP-PDOs mentioned that they go to target barangays and scan the community for abundant resources that can be used as inputs to possible livelihood enterprises. Based on SWDI results, SLP-PDOs conceptualize training activities and then enlist the help of partner agencies and CSOs. They try to saturate training with 4Ps beneficiaries, and work with the municipal social welfare and development (MSWD) officer and other DSWD colleagues to find other beneficiaries. As far as external convergence is concerned, the MACs ensure a multisectoral response to the needs of the 4Ps and SLP beneficiaries. C/MAPs list a comprehensive set of interventions by both DSWD and partners that will improve the overall wellbeing of DSWD beneficiary households in the city/municipality concerned. The C/MATs

especially the C/MAT leaders, in cooperation with the MSWD officers, work hand in hand to find ways of synchronizing and funding the interventions in the C/MAPs.

58. **Convergence processes of the 4Ps and SLP with the KC-NCDDP are more challenging not only because of differences in program design, but also because of the inherent difference in focus, with the KC-NCDDP being community-focused.** While the KC-NCDDP has common clients with the 4Ps and SLP, particularly individuals from poor households who are living in KC-NCDDP beneficiary communities, the KC-NCDDP has its own set of interventions with definite timelines to deliver public goods, most commonly infrastructure, through the support of the program and its partners (NGAs and LGUs primarily through BUB, as well as CSOs). However, convergence makes it possible for the three programs to synchronize schedules of their barangay-level activities, coordination of data gathering efforts and sharing of data, as well as the conduct of common community forums to clarify program-related issues and obtain feedback. This coordination of activities of the three programs on the ground not only results in greater efficiency, but also reduction of time required for participation of beneficiaries in separate activities. Further, KC-NCDDP community activities often count on the overwhelming support and participation of 4Ps beneficiaries, whether by attendance in BA meetings, or by serving as community volunteers or construction workers for infrastructure. However, as regards the MAC and the MIAC, it has been observed that external convergence mechanisms are programmatically separate, and yet most of the members of the MAC are also MIAC members.
59. **Action teams at both the provincial and city/municipal levels regularly meet to discuss issues and concerns.** The C/MAT has agreed on a fixed schedule to meet once a month (and as the need arises) while the PAT has agreed on a fixed schedule to meet every two months. This leads to minimizing overlaps of activities.
60. **Regions and provinces do not have an equivalent of the C/MAP, although the PATs and RCCs consolidate the C/MAPs and examine the extent to which the C/MAPs are being implemented.** Most RDs indicated that plans at the regional level are discussed in the Regional Social Development Committee and the Regional Directors Convergence Workshop meetings. C/MAT and PAT leaders are not aware of any provincial action plans nor even of regional plans. Some RCCs reported that while there are no equivalents of C/MAPs at the regional or provincial levels, plans for activities at the regional and provincial levels are formulated and based on SWDI results and financial plans.
61. **While there is no consensus on whether provinces should have or have provincial action plan, there is consensus that there is no PAT functionality assessment tool.**

RDs pointed out that if the CO were to design such a tool, there are many available indicators that can be considered (even if provinces do not actually have provincial action plan). These include indicators related to the PAT's main role as TA providers and to their conduct of M&E of the C/MAT's functionality. It may also be important to see what extent the PATs are obtaining support from DSWD partners insofar as convergence work at both the city/municipal and provincial levels are concerned.

62. **Although there is a mechanism for assessing the C/MAT functionality, there is no clear directive regarding the frequency of reporting as well as on the reference period of the C/MAT functionality assessment.** The Functionality Assessment Tool for the C/MAT has four components, viz., (1) unified planning, monitoring, and evaluation; (2) effective communication and advocacy, (3) strategic partnership; and (4) logistics and others. Indicators for the first component include SWDI analysis, its use in planning and intervention, conduct of MAT meetings, attendance of C/MAT members, and submission of C/MAP. The second component can be examined by the presence of the convergence bulletin board, feedback mechanism, convergence advocacy, and team brand. Under the third component, indicators include stakeholders' analysis, conduct of MAC/MIAC meeting, and mayor's attendance. Finally, component four indicators include convergence initiatives, common office, supplies, organizational structure, and mission/vision/goal. While PATs are responsible for conducting the C/MAT functionality assessment, it remains unclear how reporting is to be performed, both in terms of frequency and the reference period for the assessment. More guidance will be needed to clarify these issues.
63. **The C/MAT functionality assessments provide a mechanism not only for M&E of C/MATs but also operationalize an accountability framework in service delivery.** During URPMT meetings, results of C/MAT functionality assessment are presented. There are regions that give awards such as Best C/MAT and Best Convergence Initiative to motivate action teams. Action teams that have difficulty in achieving their C/MAP targets are closely monitored and provided with more technical assistance. The PAT's efforts to document best practices in convergence and success stories are also presented in some URPMT meetings. Success stories on the collaboration of the three core programs are highlighted. These not only inspire C/MAT representatives but also help in generating ideas for potential convergence initiatives as well.
64. **Some of the indicators of the functionality assessment tool are noticeably outside of the C/MAT's control.** The components and indicators of the tool, as well as issues raised during interviews are shown in Table 3.4. Many C/MAT leaders and members point out that some of indicators (such as mayor's attendance under Strategic Partnership and common office space under Logistics/Others) are beyond the C/MAT's control since these largely depend on the municipal LGU's support and on existing

infrastructures. C/MATs in poor municipalities where even mayors have no adequate office spaces and in municipalities with weak support to C/MATs are unlikely to achieve the fully functional status.

**Table 3.4. C/MAT Functional Assessment Tool**

Components	Indicators	Issues raised during interviews
Unified planning, monitoring, and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWDI analysis</li> <li>• Use of SWDI in planning and intervention</li> <li>• Conduct of MAT meetings</li> <li>• Attendance of C/MAT members</li> <li>• Submission of C/MAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWDI analysis needs to be complemented with other methods to formulate intervention</li> <li>• <i>Tatsulo</i> areas have difficulty in enjoining all members to attend.</li> </ul>
Effective communication and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convergence bulletin board</li> <li>• Feedback mechanism</li> <li>• Convergence advocacy</li> <li>• Team brand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External feedback mechanisms are weak</li> </ul>
Strategic partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders' analysis</li> <li>• Conduct of MAC/MIAC meeting</li> <li>• Mayor's attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There can be MAC/MIAC meetings but gaps are not necessarily addressed.</li> <li>• LCE attends but does not necessarily commit. Attendance is also beyond C/MATs control</li> </ul>
Logistics and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convergence initiatives</li> <li>• Common office</li> <li>• Supplies</li> <li>• Organizational structure</li> <li>• Mission/vision/goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on MLGU. Beyond C/MATs control</li> <li>• Depends on budget. Beyond C/MATs control. C/MAT members noted inadequate supplies most of the time.</li> <li>• Easy to comply with. However, some C/MAT members observed the lack of leadership. Some leaders noted the lack of hierarchy.</li> </ul>

However, there may be some sense in monitoring these indicators in order to gauge the strength of partnerships or whatever changes that may have resulted. Since these are beyond the control of the C/MAT itself, it may not be too much to hold C/MATs accountable for matters that they cannot change. There is a need to clarify whether the C/MAT functionality assessment tool is meant for M&E or for accountability purposes. Although these purposes may often overlap in scope, they are also to some extent distinct.

65. **Some of the indicators are more challenging to comply with for C/MATs in Tatsulo than for those in Dasulo<sup>26</sup> areas.** Attendance in C/MAT meetings under Unified Planning is easier to observe for those in *Dasulo* areas than for those in *Tatsulo* since KC-NCDDP projects have different modalities and have rigid timelines to follow.

<sup>26</sup> *Dasulo* areas have only two (out of three) social protection programs, e.g. 4Ps and SLP (but not KC-NCDDP), in operation, as compared to *Tatsulo* areas where all the three programs are being implemented.

A careful differentiation should be incorporated in the functionality assessment tool to reflect this issue.

**66. Indicators of the functionality assessment tool do not necessarily reflect the quality of convergence.** The LCE's presence in meetings is important to examine since representatives may not be able to make commitments, but even LCEs do not necessarily commit to addressing issues. An indicator that can reflect the quality of convergence is '*Number of issues and concerns responded to by the mayor.*' However, this indicator has its own problems as it may lead to counting apples and oranges: issues and concerns are not necessarily comparable across LCEs, and neither can these be considered to be equally important even within an LGU. Another indicator that field staff have had concerns with pertain to the conduct of MAC/MIAC meetings. While this may be important, and the frequency of meetings would suggest the importance given to convergence, the more important issue is the extent to which gaps presented during these meetings are addressed. One indicator that maybe considered could be based on '*Gaps that stakeholders committed to address.*' but this indicator also may have its own operational difficulties. It should at least be important to explain to the C/MATs that challenges in indicator-setting, i.e., indicators are not perfect, some things that must be measured may be difficult, and as such there us a need to resort to the use of proxy indicators. What may be important to have is a diagnostic tool to measure "partner satisfaction" that may be required from MAC/MIAC members to determine whether they are satisfied with (a) the performance of the C/MAT, (b) the processes for implementing the MAP, and (c) the desired outcomes for convergence. This may be a source of information on quality of convergence, since quality is ultimately customer-defined. It is also crucial for DSWD to articulate and explain the objectives for the functionality assessment tool. Once these objectives are articulated clearly and regularly, the DSWD can occasionally examine the indicators regarding their relevance, an issue that goes beyond what the current indicators measure.

**67. While the C/MAT functionality assessment tool has been downloaded to field personnel together with some guidelines, more in-depth information is required by personnel to understand the chosen indicators, the index score, and the basis of the score's intervals.** Upon examination of the sample functionality assessment tool provided by the CO, some of the points that need to be clarified include the following:

- Are the components under Unified Planning, Effective Communication and Advocacy, Strategic Partnership, and Logistics/Others equally weighted?
- If weighting is not equal, which components have higher weights and why?
- How exactly is the index score generated?



Answers to these questions are not necessary conditions for C/MAT members to do their work. However, the answers will help the action team understand the tool against which their functionality is measured.

***b. Monitoring and Evaluation***

- 68. Although some field reports have taken a convergence focus, others continue to be very programmatic.** Some C/MAT leaders reported that they have two reporting systems, one for the program and one for convergence. Programmatic reports, containing targets and accomplishments, are submitted to Social Welfare Action and Development Team, and the focal person of programs. The latter forwards the report to the RCC who consolidates these at the regional level. Convergence reports, containing C/MAT directory, C/MAP updates, convergence initiatives, minutes of C/MAT meetings, and LCTP outputs, are submitted to the SWC. SWO III and Provincial Link are copy furnished. Consolidation of these field reports is undertaken at the regional level. It has been observed that reports are not necessarily provided to the PAT leaders.
- 69. Field personnel do not have a convergent M&E system, but rather maintain several systems for M&E.** The 4Ps M&E database includes data, progress, and services provided to each beneficiary; some areas make use of a “1-kilometer template” (which includes data, progress and services provided by the core programs to each beneficiary). In most C/MATs, 4Ps personnel encode data in the scorecard, a database containing detailed information on beneficiaries, SWDI results, and interventions. The scorecard is updated as soon as services are provided.
- 70. Personnel are highly receptive of both the scorecard and the scoreboard, which are viewed as a good practice in implementing the Convergence Strategy.** Although CO staff reported to the PIDS team the existence of a unified database to facilitate joint monitoring and assessment of the programs, this was not mentioned during the field work. Field staff reported that each program maintains its database and information related to convergence, such as the scorecard, which is maintained by 4Ps personnel in most C/MATs visited. The scoreboard, a recently introduced offline tool, aims to aggregate data from the scorecard to generate visual reports on accomplishments and unmet targets. C/MAT members, particularly personnel of 4Ps, reportedly encode information in the scorecard and once the RCC download the encoded data into the scoreboard, the tool will generate graphs summarizing accomplishments and unmet targets. C/MAT leaders and RCCs reported that the scoreboard is useful and informative. Possibly due to it being in a pilot stage, people had a different understanding of the data maintained in the scorecard and the scoreboard. Some observed that the scoreboard and the scorecard were two separate

databases and would entail additional work. Others observed that the data from the scorecard were inputs to the scoreboard. Field staff also suggested that the scoreboard should be web-based, and reported that the amount of information that the C/MAT need to encode is voluminous, i.e., their computer hangs in the middle of encoding. Some C/MATs reported not having seen the scoreboard until recently. Further testing of the scorecard in the field is needed not only to understand the technical aspects such as system requirements but to improve its value as a tool of convergence and to foresee how the information in the scorecard can be made available to external users.

71. **DSWD partners do not maintain databases that tag 4Ps beneficiaries.** The DA, for instance, serves farmers (some of whom include 4Ps beneficiaries) sometimes through training and provision of agricultural inputs. However, the databases of DA do not identify 4Ps beneficiaries. When these databases are shared with DSWD, the Department personnel need to match the list of DSWD program beneficiaries with that of the DA's list of serviced clients. This can be challenging owing to the possibility of misspelled names. Meanwhile, government agencies interested in detailed DSWD microdata need to write a letter of request to the RD. This mechanism is meant to ensure the protection of individual information under the Data Privacy Act of 2012.
72. **Other stakeholders, such as CSOs, do not have access to C/MAT data, except during the MAC/MIAC meeting where the C/MAT presents aggregate information on gaps and targets.** Some CSOs, especially those who are lending, noted that since they are not provided access to microdata about DSWD beneficiaries, they are prevented from correctly assessing the creditworthiness of beneficiaries. Some DSWD project beneficiaries have existing loans from two to three sources, and there are concerns that they may not be able to pay up their obligations. However, releasing individual information to CSOs may violate the Data Privacy Act, especially as there will be no way to guarantee the privacy of these data once they are released to people in the private sector. CSOs engaged in lending can do their own credit investigations. Nonetheless, feedback channels and mechanisms between DSWD and CSOs should be strengthened, and it will be important for DSWD to work with the National Privacy Commission to come up with a data sharing mechanism with partners that can guarantee that data will not be misused or abused.
73. **Individual performance of DSWD personnel is evaluated using the Individual Performance Contract Review (IPCR), which sometimes contains convergence deliverables, but across areas that do, these are given different weights.** DSWD contractual staff or MOA workers need to get a score in the IPCR of at least 80%, corresponding to a qualitative equivalent of very satisfactory, to get a renewal of contract/MOA. While key result area (KRA) in the IPCR include both programmatic

and convergence-related items, the IPCR of each of the social protection programs differs.

In one municipality, the KRAs of SLP include: (1) strategic goal, (2) core functions, (3) other tasks, and (4) reportorial/administrative functions. Convergence-related items are relegated to KRAs 3 and 4. On the other hand, the KRAs of KC-NCDDP include: (1) facilitation of CEAC processes/targets, (2) capability building/technical assistance, (3) management/strategic support services, and (4) compliance to directives from higher officials. Convergence-related items are relegated to KRA 4.

In another municipality, KRAs are the same for KC-NCDDP and 4Ps, namely, (1) strategic goal, (2) core function, (3) reportorial function, (4) accountability, and (5) other assignments. However, the weight allocation differs. For KC-NCDDP, KRAs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are 10%, 45%, 20%, 20% and 5%, respectively. Convergence-related items are in KRAs 1 and 3. For 4Ps, weight allocation is 20%, 37%, 9%, 19%, and 15%, respectively. Convergence-related items are in KRAs 1 (SG2 which is 5%) and some items in KRAs 3 and 5.

- 74. The lack of uniformity of the IPCR across programs is an issue identified by most of the DSWD personnel; this has implications on how convergence is perceived and practiced.** While some regions include both convergence and program deliverables in one IPCR form, there are others that do not. Different regions have different weight allocations as well. In one region, convergence performance is 20% and program performance is 80% while in another, it is 30% and 70%, respectively. For regions with the former weight allocation, convergence can easily be relegated to the background since personnel can get an adjectival rating of very satisfactory by focusing on programmatic deliverables alone. For the Convergence Strategy to take more prominence, it will be important to standardize the IPCRs and preferably provide a 30% weight allocation to convergence deliverables, as is done in Region III, a region that has good practices for the Convergence Strategy according to CO staff.

***c. Resource management and communications***

- 75. While C/MAT members have agreed to meet on a fixed schedule every month, the conduct of C/MAT meetings is sometimes affected by activities of the three core programs.** Some C/MAT leaders find it challenging to motivate members to attend C/MAT meetings due to program assignments. This issue appears to be more pronounced for KC-NCDDP personnel since KC-NCDDP project implementation has a timeline to follow. While C/MAT members are broad-minded, frequent absences of KC-NCDDP personnel during C/MAT meetings can sometimes result in others feeling annoyed if not disgruntled. Note that attendance of C/MAT members in meetings is one of the indicators in the C/MAT functionality assessment tool.

76. **Coordination of meetings is easier if the three core programs are in the same office.** However, this largely depends on existing infrastructures. It was pointed out that there are some municipalities where LCEs have half-hearted support to DSWD programs and may not necessarily provide office spaces for DSWD staff. Further, there are also municipalities where even LCEs do not have appropriate office spaces.
77. **Tenure of employment affects the implementation of the Convergence Strategy to the extent that it results in personnel's attrition, lack of morale and perceived lack of authority.** Most 4Ps personnel are contractual while all KC-NCDDP personnel are job order workers engaged through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Some of these DSWD personnel have reportedly transferred to other NGAs, such as DOH and DepED, that offer permanent or contractual positions. This attrition in employees hampers the continuity of the Convergence Strategy. In addition, when the staff leave, the Department has to shoulder additional costs in training new recruits, without which would likely derail convergence.

In addition, morale can be low for some personnel who have served the Department but have remained under MOA. There are cases reported of KC-NCDDP personnel who have served for several years under MOA, while SLP personnel have become contractual after 6 months of service. In some areas, personnel hired under MOA often experience one-to-two-month delays in receiving their salaries. These challenging constraints do not help the programs and the convergence strategy to the extent that personnel become demotivated.

During interviews, reports of difficulties in convening people have also been raised arising from tenure issues. Some SWCs reported that while information is easy to collect at the ground, TA is sometimes difficult to give. They observed that they are not being looked up to as persons with authority and they attributed this to their status as workers under MOA while the C/MAT members, who receive TA, are either contractual or regular.

78. **High caseloads for 4Ps personnel have been reported, which poses a challenge in making the delivery of services more focused and personal.** Some C/MAT leaders think caseloads should be between 500 and 600 while others think it should be 300. While these numbers vary, most personnel prefer caseloads lower than what they currently manage, which can be much more than double their preferred number of caseloads. Due to these high caseloads, 4Ps personnel could not conduct all home visits during workweeks, and instead have to do their social case management during weekends or during Family Development Sessions (FDS).

79. **Human resource augmentation is required to reduce caseloads and to improve the quality of services provided to beneficiaries.** Recognizing the importance of caseloads reduction, some C/MAT leaders have suggested that management augment human resources. In addition, beneficiaries in some municipalities reported that some SLP-PDOs lack monitoring initiatives. They attributed this to the possibility that the PDOs are probably overworked since there is only one that is assigned to cover several municipalities. PAT leaders who handle KC-NCDDP in areas that no longer have KC-NCDDP personnel also mentioned during interviews that it is challenging to perform their tasks as PAT leaders and simultaneously as KC implementers. Some of them have already requested their respective RDs to unload from them the PAT leadership.
80. **The shortage of office supplies was noted across all municipalities visited by the PIDS team.** Since Convergence is not a program, it does not have its own supplies. The three programs share supplies for the Convergence Strategy, although the bulk of these office supplies used for Convergence comes from *Pantawid*. While the sharing of supplies for convergence work itself suggests convergence, it is important for DSWD leadership to find a way of addressing such shortages, which can be overcome by having more foresight on required resources from the CO to the field.
81. **Field personnel hope that DSWD could have a faster and more efficient processing of reimbursement for travel expenses.** In accomplishing their tasks, DSWD personnel have to spend money for fieldwork, and very often, reimbursement for their Travel Expense Voucher is a lengthy process. For some cities/municipalities, reimbursement takes three to four months. In addition, travel expenses are subject to evaluation and are sometimes not reimbursed in full.
82. **While DSWD has standard guidelines and operating procedures for processing travel expenses, covering a GIDA requires insurance, higher travel expenses, and higher per diem.** Some C/MAT members noted that it is expensive to travel to GIDAs where they use two to three modes of transportation to reach beneficiaries. They point out that travel expenses and per diem to cover these areas should be higher. Given the nature of the area and the fact that personnel sometimes go on foot, personnel assigned to cover GIDAs should also be provided with some insurance as well.
83. **Guidelines/directives from the CO to the field are important in terms of preparation and logistics.** Field interviewees reported the following issues:
- No specific directive identified the frequency of conducting SWDI. Some RCCs reported that the SWDI was supposed to be undertaken annually but only a baseline was conducted. The SWDI was not conducted in 2016 and thus far, there is still no directive about its conduct for 2017.

- Hitherto, there are also no guidelines on the frequency of submission of the scorecard as well as the C/MAT functionality assessment. Neither is it clear what reference period to consider for the assessment.
- MC 14, Series of 2015, needs to be amended to reflect what is actually happening in the field office. According to the MC, the SWC is under the PSU, but in practice, the SWC reports to RCCs. This should be properly reflected in the organizational structure. Many other observations have also been noted about the lack of details of the organizational structure from the CO to the field offices.
- The Tatsulo Manual (2011) also needs severe updating. Much of the organizational structures and business processes mentioned in the Manual are no longer in operation.
- One RD noted that development of tools/protocols will benefit from consultations with field personnel.

84. **Some protocols reportedly hamper the timely implementation of projects.** Some RCCs noted that if all DSWD programs are implemented, there is no need for funding coming from external stakeholders. However, there are projects that need Special Disbursement Officers (SDOs) who disburse funds for one project at a time and require liquidation before releasing the next tranche. Liquidation takes time if there are many modalities in one municipality. Implementation of other projects is hampered by these protocols.

85. **A number of activities of the three core programs get synchronized as a result of the Convergence Strategy, which leads to the efficient use not only of DSWD's resources but the use of beneficiaries' time as well.** For example, beneficiaries who attended a Barangay Assembly (BA) are also considered to have attended the FDS. In this case, programmatic targets of KC-NCDDP and 4Ps are both achieved. In Bicol, internal convergence is relatively strong. Personnel no longer viewed convergence as an additional task. Rather, staff in each program designed activities with the deliverables of the three core programs in mind. In addition, all C/MAT members in Bicol assisted in the conduct of the SWDI. This enhanced everybody's understanding of the basis of their program's intervention.

86. **The Convergence Strategy contributes to elements that facilitate further internal collaboration and organization.** Convergence strengthens camaraderie among the three core programs. Prior to convergence, interaction and friendship have been limited: some KC-NCDDP personnel would not mingle with 4Ps and SLP; the KC-NCDDP beneficiary community also did not know that KC-NCDDP is also part of DSWD programs. Joint BA-FDS have become venues for 4Ps beneficiaries not only to learn (from topics in the FDS), but also to raise issues, clarifications and complaints.

C/MATs noted that this reduces the beneficiaries' aggression toward DSWD staff. Also, some C/MATs noted that there is a greater lobbying advantage now that it is the entire action team that coordinates with municipal LGUs.

**87. Values formation of 4Ps beneficiaries is integrated into the 4Ps through the FDS and YDS.** Depending on the module, there are sessions attended by mothers, by youths, and by couples. The FDS has not only provided beneficiaries and their family members awareness of social issues (such as VAWC, rights of women and children, child labor, child trafficking) but it has transformed their ways of thinking as well. Pregnant women get prenatal check-ups and mothers bring children for vaccination and deworming. Women are also more conscious of proper hygiene, e.g., regularly taking a bath at least once a day. Husbands no longer physically abuse their wives. People have become more spiritual and have shown more care for their neighbors. Illegal activities have been reduced as well. Through the YDS, youths are becoming more aware of social issues like drug use and teenage pregnancy.

**88. Community involvement has been strengthened, especially among 4Ps beneficiaries.** *Pantawid* beneficiaries participate in the discussions of what community project to prioritize and they volunteer to participate during its implementation. The Convergence Strategy also enhanced the *Bayanihan* spirit. There was one instance when KC-NCDDP had a problem with the hauling of materials. Through KC-NCDDP's coordination with the Municipal Link, 4Ps beneficiaries from one barangay were mobilized. This not only helped KC personnel to meet their target but also taught beneficiaries the spirit of working together for their community. In addition, beneficiaries have become more involved in environmental protection programs such as solid waste management and beach reforestation.

**89. Another good practice observed is that the C/MAT's convergence initiatives have helped communities, stakeholders, and DSWD alike.** Identification of a pressing community problem and bringing all necessary players together is another practice that work well for all stakeholders.

- In one community where good hygiene and proper sanitation are pressing issues, all households in the top three poor barangays are provided toilet bowls by the municipal LGU through the coordination of DSWD personnel while beneficiaries contributed to the initiative by providing free labor in putting up the communal septic tank.
- In another municipality, some family members of 4Ps beneficiaries have become seasonal employees in beach resorts.

- In region 7, convergence caravans were undertaken in September 2016 to serve 5-6 municipalities. DSWD and partner agencies provided interventions to beneficiaries in one event, including FDS, forum, and consultation with DA, TESDA, DTI, and DOH. Partner agencies had positive feedback on the caravan since all agencies saved resources. They planned to do the caravan again in 2017.
- Structured responses during typhoons and natural disasters is another good practice arising from effective team work within C/MAT. In some areas where disasters frequently strike, certain C/MAT members are given specific assignments, i.e., specific tasks on specific schedules in order to easily mobilize people, information, and resources, and to tap municipal LGUs for relief operation. This reportedly cannot be done by a regular DSWD program since it is sometimes challenging to get real-time disaster-related data (e.g. number of casualties, number of people in evacuation areas, etc.) from the municipal LGU.

#### *d. Recommendations*

90. **Strengthen IT initiatives for internal and external use.** Processing of documents is centralized in some regions. The lack of innovation in financial management contributes to delays that hamper project implementation at the ground. Other than hiring additional personnel and decentralization of processing documents, developing online financial management system will help address administrative bottlenecks.

DSWD personnel is highly receptive of the scoreboard due to its ability to summarize information and to present information in comprehensive and easily understood visuals. However, inputting of data should be web-based since the computer hangs in the middle of encoding. Other than facilitating encoding, making the scoreboard web-based means that the database can be made available to the public. Making these aggregate data available for public consumption will encourage the community of academics and researchers to conduct further studies on social protection programs and on Convergence Strategy. The wealth of information collected at the ground will aid policymakers in formulating evidence-based policy initiatives.

91. **Improve the management of resources.** Specific suggestions include the following:
- **Reduce caseloads and increase personnel.** Volume of caseloads consistently appears in the list of challenges faced by 4Ps field personnel. High caseloads prevent a more focused and more personalized delivery of services to the beneficiaries. Manpower augmentation is needed to address the caseload reduction of 4Ps personnel. Augmentation of SLP and KC-NCDDP personnel is likewise needed. The lack of SLP personnel sometimes result in PDOs' inadequate monitoring initiatives while the lack of KC-NCDDP personnel sometimes results to weak coordination with PATs whose leaders are also often the KC- NCDDP.



These PAT leaders reported that they have taken over the responsibilities of KC-NCDDP in municipalities that no longer have KC-NCDDP personnel.

- **Reform systems and protocols pertaining to travelling.** Current processes and systems pertaining to travel and related expenses make fieldwork more challenging. DSWD will need to provide faster reimbursement of travel expenses firstly by identifying and addressing bottlenecks, and eventually by automating financial systems. Further, the provision of higher travel expenses to cover GIDA areas is warranted. If possible, the DSWD will need to provide insurance for personnel assigned to cover GIDA areas.
- **Provide adequate office supplies for the Convergence Strategy.** Understandably the Convergence Strategy is not a program and as such cannot be provided with its own office supplies. However, more guidelines on resource sharing could be provided to field staff, or supplemented by the CO from regular supplies.
- **Set-up an infrastructure that collates the experiences of people on the ground.** Knowledge sharing on what works and what does not work is important for people to replicate good practices and generate new convergence initiatives. While programs and services have to cater to the unique needs of the community, good practices share common or similar elements that need to be documented. Further, one does not only learn from good practices. DSWD could also have online internal bulletin board systems that allow staff to share experiences with each other, especially on encountering and solving problems.

92. **Merge the MAC and MIAC.** Since practically all members of the MAC are members of the MIAC, there is strong justification for consolidating these two separate committees. Merging these groups sends a strong message to DSWD staff and social protection stakeholders about convergence.

93. **Harmonize the basis of interventions by complementing the SWDI with other methods.** While the SWDI provides an overall assessment of welfare conditions of households, and when aggregated, of the community, the SWDI cannot be the sole basis of interventions of the three core programs. Harmonizing the KC-NCDDP's CLPI with the SWDI is important; however, the SLP's rider questions in the SWDI are not, by themselves, adequate for formulating SLP training/livelihood projects. Failure of several SLP projects is mostly attributed to the use of capital to address daily needs. This raises serious issues on the capabilities of SLP personnel to determine interventions with limited information available from the SWDI. Some SLP projects failed due to deaths of livestock. Other projects have yet to realize profits. Those that have seen material outputs have encountered market-related problems. These issues suggest the need to supplement SWDI with immersion as well as feasibility and marketing studies for the formulation of SLP interviews.

94. **Review the C/MAT functionality assessment tool.** There is a need for a thorough review of the C/MAT functionality assessment tool to possibly address issues about the quality and depth of functionality. Further some other issues need to be discussed more comprehensively, e.g., making use of indicators that are beyond the C/MAT's control, the frequency of reporting, the time frame of the functionality assessment, the scoring system and the basis of the score's intervals. More consultations with C/MATs about the tool can provide an avenue for improving the tool, as well as a mechanism to foster ownership.
95. **Develop a functionality assessment tool for the PAT.** Indicators that can be considered should look into the main role of the PAT as TA providers and the PAT's conduct of M&E of the C/MAT's functionality. Similar to the case of the C/MAT functionality assessment tool, consultation with field staff on the indicators for the assessment in all stages of the development of the PAT functionality assessment tool is essential.
96. **Include convergence deliverables in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of field staff.** The TORs of field staff tend to specify general expectations, and some programmatic deliverables but hardly any expectations on convergence duties. This needs correction in order to ensure that staff leverage systems, develop more shared values and take a stronger sense of ownership of the Convergence Strategy.
97. **Revise the IPCR to standardize its content and the weight allocations for components, particularly as they pertain to convergence.** The IPCR is the basis of performance of each C/MAT member. An examination of data shows that KRAs in the IPCRs differ across programs for some regions. In other regions, KRAs are the same but the weight allocation differs. Convergence-related items are likewise lodged under different KRAs in the IPCRs of the three programs. While it is a challenge to make the KRAs consistent on program deliverables, convergence elements can be made uniform across the programs' IPCRs. That is, a revised IPCR can be designed to contain two elements, namely, program and convergence. Each element will have 2-3 KRAs and the KRAs for convergence can be standardized across programs. Having an explicit heading for the Convergence Strategy in the IPCR will help remind personnel of their convergence responsibilities, and of the importance of mainstreaming convergence in their work.

It would also help the Convergence Strategy if weight allocation to convergence elements are given at least 30%. Getting at least a VS, around 80%, is necessary for contract renewal. If only 20% is allocated to convergence, then DSWD personnel can focus only on their programmatic deliverables without paying attention to convergence

and still get renewed. Assigning a reasonably higher weight allocation to convergence will prevent this from happening.

Leadership performance should also be included in the IPCR for team leaders and their leadership initiatives and innovations should be given credit.

98. **Improve the clarity of directives and logistics support.** Gaps on directives from the CO include the frequency of conducting SWDI, the frequency of submission of the scorecard and the frequency of (and reference period for) the C/MAT functionality assessment. The CO also needs to update the organizational structure provided by MC 14, Series of 2015 to clarify where exactly the SWC is lodged. According to MC 14, the SWC is both under the PSU (page 5) and under CMAT (page 6). In practice, the SWC is lodged under the PAT but their designation is at the same level as the Municipal Link. Some SWCs claimed it would help them perform their roles as providers of TA and as focal persons for convergence at the regional level if they have a designation at the provincial level. An RD reported that the SWC can be given a SWO III-Convergence designation but should be given more accountability in ensuring convergence at the ground. The Tatsulo Manual (2011) also requires extensive updating especially as both CO and field staff need to see where they fit, what is expected of them, and how they are accountable.

### 3.3. Capacity Development: Building Human Resources and Partnerships

99. **While the core programs have social protection as an overarching objective, directing these programs to adhere to a synchronized delivery of interventions can be a challenge since the programs have been separately crafted, each with distinct designs, strategies and capacities.** At times, programmatic targets can encourage personnel to think in silos. In addition, key stakeholders have similar goals but can have priority sectors and priority areas that are different from those of the core programs. Engaging them to complement and augment the Department's interventions will likely result in programs and services that respond to local needs.

Due to diversity in existing designs and strategies in the programs, prevailing mindsets and capacities, and new roles created to accommodate the Convergence Strategy, there is a need for boundary-spanning activities that nurture the culture of convergence to make responses of staff to issues adaptive. This section discusses the findings on staff orientation/capacity-development and internal/external partnership building. Traditionally, the term capacity development has been solely associated with technical training of individuals. Since the 1990s, there has been recognition that capacity development<sup>27</sup> go beyond the level of the individual, and actually, include the institution and enabling environment. Emerging from the definitions above as well as learning lessons from both good and not-so-good practices, capacity development can be understood as a process of change, and involves managing transformations of capacities at three levels i.e. the individual, the institution, and the enabling environments. For the process to sustain the strengthening of abilities at these three interlinked and interdependent levels, investments in capacity development must design and account for impact at these multiple levels. In addition, capacity development activities cannot be one-off interventions. While there may be short-term outcomes in activities for capacity development, there will be a need to ensure longer-term impacts on existing competencies and capabilities at the individual, institutional and enabling environment levels. Finally, and most importantly, capacity development involves ownership. While capacity development also includes organization structures, which was discussed earlier, we first discuss human resource development, as well as building partnerships, which are also part of development of the enabling environment.

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<sup>27</sup> "A locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that brings about changes in socio-political, policy-related, and organizational factors to enhance local ownership for and the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a development goal." Otoo *et al.* (2009).

*a. Staff orientation and human resource development*

100. **The success of convergence efforts depends, in large part, on the human resources of the Department and on their appreciation of the Convergence Strategy.** The PIDS Research team did find evidence to support a hypothesis that convergence worked better in areas wherein there was highest improvement in the SWDI results compared to areas wherein there was lowest improvement. What the PIDS Research team observed was that DSWD staff commitment to convergence was crucial, and this is why DSWD will need to develop a system that develops its human resources. The social connection of C/MAT members to the community plays an important role in encouraging people's active participation in DSWD activities and in harnessing local knowledge to make projects successful. While C/MAT is crafted based on SWDI results, successful implementation of projects/services outlined in the C/MAT eventually depends on the attitude and cooperation of internal and external players of the Strategy. Hence, SWDI results do not necessarily translate to the success of the Strategy although these can be leveraged for improving convergence practices. In recently established C/MATs, age composition appears to be a challenge, with the younger members being more difficult to lead. At the C/MAT level, leaders who have good convergence initiatives are key to convergence efforts. At the level beyond the C/MAT, the RCC's ability to effectively monitor convergence efforts at the provincial and municipal levels and to provide TA is a critical element in ensuring that guidelines/protocols and tools/models are accurately downloaded to the PAT and C/MAT.
101. **Capacity development is important for the staff to embrace the concept of convergence especially when they also have to cope with issues on employment tenure, high caseloads, and programmatic deliverables.** C/MAT leaders are the main recipients of capacity-building, particularly the LCTP, which is undertaken in collaboration with partner higher educational institutions (HEIs) such as Ateneo De Naga and University of the Philippines. The LCTP has a practicum period, during which C/MAT leaders apply their leadership initiatives under the close supervision of Coach Monitors.

In some municipalities, Bridging Leadership (BL) sessions were attended by C/MAT members although this was participated in by selected personnel and selected municipalities. In others, BL sessions were attended by leaders who are mostly Municipal Links. Just as in any organization, personnel at DSWD come and go. When team leaders leave, and they are the only ones that have been provided intensive training on the Convergence Strategy, the continuity of the Strategy is hampered.

102. **There are no monetary rewards for good performance of action teams but there are non-monetary incentives.** C/MAT leaders consider the LCTP as a reward since this enhances their leadership skills and communication abilities. Some RCCs reported that there is a plan to make LCTP equivalent to some MA units in Public Administration. In most municipalities, C/MAT members noted that a good performance not only merits a renewal of their contract but also serves as a basis for promotion. Good performers are prioritized over outsiders for regular positions. As a way of appreciation/affirmation of good performance in Central Visayas, some DSWD personnel with good track records are resource persons during orientations of new personnel. In 2015, awards are also given such as Best Municipal Link and Best C/MAT in Butuan, Agusan del Norte.

103. **As part of capacity development, under-performing C/MATs are closely monitored and are provided with more TA.** PATs and SWCs work closely with these C/MATs and the RCCs also steps in if issues could not be resolved. Non-performing DSWD personnel are subject to further evaluation. Contracts may not be renewed for personnel who are persistently under-performing.

104. **To sustain convergence efforts, training investments in the entire convergence teams at the regional, provincial, city/municipal levels are indispensable.** C/MAT members are a pool of potential convergence leaders; a deeper appreciation of the Strategy is key to building a strong sense of ownership among all C/MAT members. In most municipalities, the BL attended by C/MAT members was last held around 2012 to 2013, the time that most C/MATs were formed. Most RDs and PAT leaders have indicated interest in also getting leadership training/seminars. RDs reported that they have yet to attend the Executive Leadership for Convergence Program (ELCP).

At the start of the year, the Convergence Program Evaluation Workshop (CPEW) is held in some regions to provide direction on the role of the RCC on convergence. Some RCCs noted that CPEW should be conducted for PATs and C/MATs as well.

As the Convergence Strategy evolves, new directives, guidelines, and memos are formulated for implementation; further, new protocols and tools are developed. Field personnel need to be updated of these developments. Capacity development, whether in the form of formal events or mentoring, is a key element to ensure the continuity of the Strategy.

105. **Investments in human resource development particularly for all C/MAT members are needed to make them responsive and adaptive to emerging situations and issues for the welfare of beneficiaries.** An RCC reported that in one municipality, a KC-NCDDP project had a sustainability component to be undertaken with SLP. The

SLP-PDO's response, however, was to turn the project down since it entailed tasks outside of the PDO's Terms of Reference (TOR). Training will likely help personnel develop personal responses that transcend the mentality to stick to expectations in his/her TOR, and think out of the box. It will likely raise their sense of co-ownership.

106. **A regular orientation on the Convergence Strategy, at the very least annually, is important to help clarify issues, and to update DSWD staff on changing policies and focus.** Some issues and suggestions that emerged from the FGDs/KIIs related to orientation are the following:

- Both hiring and orientations at DSWD are programmatic, and often do not involve mentioning about the Convergence Strategy. Some RDs suggested that orientations should not only introduce the Convergence Strategy but should also emphasize that convergence is the umbrella under which 4Ps/SLP/KC are lodged.
- The role of SWDI as the basis of all programmatic plans should be highlighted. Understanding that all program plans are anchored in SWDI results will help direct all efforts towards the achievement of similar goals. There are some SLP-PDOs who are not aware that SWDI should be the basis of SLP's intervention. In addition, there are some C/MAT members who are not familiar with the three core programs. Some C/MAT leaders are not aware of their reportorial duties as well.
- While PAT leaders have been part of the C/MAT and they have knowledge of the Convergence Strategy, leaders at the provincial level who were recently installed need immediate orientation from outgoing PAT leaders to ensure that processes are well-understood. The need for a proper turnover of outgoing team leaders to incoming leaders was also raised in some areas. In one province, only one out of nine municipalities had submitted a hard copy of the C/MAPs to the PAT due to the resignation of personnel.
- Programmatic biases can get in the way of the personnel's appreciation of the Convergence Strategy. For example, a few KC-NCDDP personnel think that conducting FDS is easy, while some 4Ps would think that KC-NCDDP personnel are *istambays* that get paid. Breaking away from these programmatic biases can lead to a deeper appreciation of the Convergence Strategy. Some PAT leaders who are not 4Ps implementers have tried to attend FDS and have realized that it was actually a fulfilling experience to motivate people to make their lives better.
- One RD also reported that, sometimes, the CO sends people to attend URPMT meetings who are new and not well-versed with the Convergence Strategy. It would be important for everyone to at least get some basic orientation on the Strategy.

*b. Strategic partnerships with LGUs*

107. **In large part, the success of the external convergence efforts crucially depends on how municipal LGUs seriously own up to the C/MAPs.** To date, *Pantawid* gets fragmented support from municipal LGUs. There are municipalities that have positive views about 4Ps, but there are also municipalities that are difficult to tap for support. One reason for the lack of cooperation comes from the view that 4Ps is dole out and municipal LGUs do not want to encourage their constituents to be dependent, although it is more likely that this is only a reported reason. The main reason may be that the 4Ps beneficiaries were not largely selected by the LGUs. Further, some staff of LGUs also view DSWD programs as providing them additional tasks, and requiring additional resources. Most LGUs may tend to be more supportive of KC-NCDDP than household-based programs (whether 4Ps or SLP), as the underlying projects in KC-NCDDP are public goods, i.e., mostly infrastructure.

108. **Given differing views on DSWD social protection programs (especially 4Ps and SLPs), the municipal LGU's support to the Convergence Strategy is likewise fragmented.** In some areas, LCEs are extremely supportive of the Department's programs/activities. In others, support is wanting and this is manifested in the following stories:

- There are municipalities that struggled in their convergence activities due to the lack of support from LCEs. The lack of the municipal LGU's support is observed in the quality of venues provided for the DSWD activities, in the regular absence of the LCE in the MAC/MIAC, and, in the relegation of presiding duties by the LCE to other members during MAC/MIAC meetings.
- In some areas, MAC/MIAC meetings are attended by representatives of the LCE and stakeholders. The fact that these representatives could not commit on behalf of the LCEs, resulted to some implementation bottlenecks. In some municipalities, LCEs refused to commit to address gaps reported during MAC meetings for the C/MAPS reportedly either due to a lack of budget or these gaps identified were just not part of the LCEs' priority projects.
- In some municipalities, the implementation of KC-NCDDP projects was also hampered by misunderstandings between the KC-NCDDP personnel and LCE. This eventually resulted in the pull-out of KC-NCDDP projects.

109. **Municipal LGUs are informed of the conditions and needs of their constituents from poor families based on several assessment methods such as PSA, SI, and Barangay Profiling, and on data collected by DSWD, such as the SWDI and the CLPI.** This is partly meant to capacitate municipal LGUs so that their development plans are synchronized with those of the C/MAPs. While municipal LGUs are involved in planning interventions, some C/MAT leaders and members reported several issues



during the actual implementation of initiatives in the C/MAPs. These include the following:

- Interventions do not always involve prioritization of 4Ps beneficiaries.
- Some areas have weak coordination and feedback mechanisms between DSWD and the municipal LGU. In some municipalities, the Department is not aware of the interventions administered by the municipal LGU and DSWD personnel have to take the initiative of tracking down 4Ps beneficiaries from the stakeholder's list of beneficiaries.
- Some C/MATs, typically in municipalities with weak support from municipal LGUs, find it difficult to follow-up on the stakeholder's commitments since the position of the DSWD personnel is much lower than that of the stakeholder's.

*c. Strategic partnerships with other agencies and organizations*

110. **While the Department has advanced its strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, there is a need to assess the extent of data sharing with partners to further enhance partnerships.** While aggregate data are presented in MAC/MIAC meetings, specific and detailed data are needed by other stakeholders for their interventions. DSWD has to develop protocols on data-sharing while protecting individual data from being misused, as per the Data Privacy Act.

111. **While the ALS of DepED is included in the list of facilities to be monitored, it can further collaborate with DSWD as a training provider and as an educator/formator of parents.** The main clients of DepED's ALS are out-of-school youth and drop-outs from formal education. After earning an ALS certificate, students need to pass accreditation and equivalency examination administered by DepED once a year. Upon positive assessment of mobile teachers and coordinators, students can take the ALC competency exam. Conferment of a diploma follows after passing the exam.

Other than helping to educate the children who are not enrolled in the formal education, ALS staff mentioned that the ALS can also be more involved in helping the families of 4Ps beneficiaries. The ALS staff can help the DSWD in providing continuing education to parents since strong partnerships between home and school are a key factor for children to succeed in their pursuit of education. The home should be able to complement formal or informal schooling to facilitate learning, but this complementation may be lacking in several *Pantawid* household beneficiaries. The ALS staff are also reportedly familiar with livelihood issues. The DSWD can explore with DepED possibilities for ALS to provide values formation assistance to parent beneficiaries in the FDS since there is a need to strengthen financial literacy among 4Ps beneficiaries, and youth beneficiaries in the YDS.

Even though the ALS programs are free, the ALS staff finds it difficult to recruit participants. In some municipalities, ALS had initiated for them to get involved in DSWD programs since ALS has observed that there are out-of-school youths in some 4Ps homes. The ALS had to reach out to these beneficiaries by asking help from the Parent Leaders of *Pantawid*. Clearly, ALS programs have not been fully maximized. The DSWD will need to work more closely with DepED to find ways of further collaboration and coordination, particularly to encourage youth in DSWD beneficiary families to participate in ALS programs.

112. **The DSWD's provides elaborate protocols on its external convergence mechanisms with CSOs.** These include a general framework for the different forms of partnerships (MC 7, s. 2012), a particular framework for public-private partnerships (AO 4, s. 2015), and operational guidelines for these frameworks (MC 11 s. 2015). While these documents have undoubtedly guided the development of DSWD partnerships with CSOs, it is unclear whether plans are currently in place for a regular review of these guidelines based on M&E of successful and unsuccessful practices in partnership development.

113. **Successful collaborations of DSWD with partners have been noted but do not seem to be widely disseminated.** In Donsol, Sorsogon, DSWD collaborates extensively with I-Help, a faith-based CSO, with arrangements formalized through a MOA. Given its track record in assisting communities through several interventions, I-Help assists the DSWD in the conduct of FDS, in providing livelihood training, and, in analyzing data to identify interventions that need to be provided to households and communities. The DSWD in Donsol is also currently working to formalize partnership through a MOA with *Kabalikat*, another CSO (which aims to strengthen the youth and the family and) which is composed mainly of teachers suited to the DSWD's Gabay. In Butuan, CSOs such as the National Auxiliary Chaplaincy of the Philippines and the Family Federation for World Peace have been tapped to assist in the conduct of the FDS/YDS.

114. **Gender is generally mainstreamed in the convergence efforts.** During FDS, information on gender-related laws such as Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), trafficking of women and children, and child labor, is disseminated. According to field staff, in KC-NCDDP funded projects, there should be at least 10% women laborers. SLP staff also try to ensure gender-balance in training and other employment opportunities.

115. **External convergence with NGAs at the national level is weak.** Some RDs reported that external collaboration should be vigorously practiced at the CO. There is

an expectation for the CO to discuss the Convergence Strategy with other NGAs that have similar social protection thrusts in order to design measures for further strengthening of external convergence initiatives, especially at the field offices. A starting point that can be explored is to strengthen the tracking of 4Ps beneficiaries by NGAs such as DA, DAR, DENR, DepED, and the sharing of these databases to operationalize a WOG approach to improving welfare conditions across the government bureaucracy. This has the potential to save time on the part of the Department's personnel and to improve the quality of interventions that can be provided in the future.

**116. While the CO typically provides directives to the office and makes use of communications channels, field staff reported some gaps that hamper operations.**

- Field staff lament that convergence is not operationalized at the CO. Since field personnel belong to different programs governed by targets and guidelines, they follow directives coming from their respective PMOs. Some RCCs report that it is easier to communicate with DSWD personnel if formal communications from the CO are issued every time new tools are introduced or additional convergence activities are needed.
- Some RCCs reported that the TA of the CO to the Regional Offices mostly involved or limited to memos or phone calls. In these regions, RPCs for the three programs work in silos. Field personnel follow program schedules independent of the other programs and work to submit programmatic deliverables. Since RPCs do not coordinate their activities, and prioritize the conduct of their own programs, field staff relegate convergence deliverables as secondary to programmatic deliverables.
- In 2015, several collaborations with stakeholders such as NEDA, DENR, DOH, and World Bank had been piloted in some areas, including the Accelerated Sustainable Anti-Poverty Program and the Water Sanitation and Hygiene. These collaborations have significant impacts in the community. Unfortunately, there is no directive to date whether these joint efforts are supposed to continue or not.

***d. Recommendations***

**117. Develop specific expected outcomes on internal and external convergence especially at levels above the city/municipal level.** Each of the three social protection programs is governed by targets and guidelines and a tendency to work in silos. But there are a number of benefits in having strong coordination from the CO to the provincial levels. At the city/municipal levels, specific outcomes are expected, especially the C/MAPs, and the functionality of the C/MATs are assessed, but the

specific deliverables above C/MATs are unclear. To start with, the CO can look at the extent of the Department's existing partnerships with DepED and DOH, and assess areas for improving these partnerships. Further, modalities for new institutional partnerships with other NGAs have to be identified, whether by the CO or at the regional level. These partnerships will also provide a mechanism for improved convergence in field offices.

118. **Provide regular orientation (at least annually) on the Convergence Strategy to staff (and partners), as well as work to provide some form of training/capacity development for staff.** It has been observed that many DSWD staff show dedication to their work but they also expressed some resentments about employment tenure, high caseloads, lack of speed in getting their reimbursements, among others. Capacity-building activities provide a form of non-monetary incentive, and can be a promising mechanism for staff to fully embrace convergence. Recipients of training on convergence thus far are mostly team leaders, but investments whether in formal or non-formal training in all C/MAT members are indispensable to sustain convergence efforts. C/MAT members are a pool of potential convergence leaders and their deeper appreciation of the Strategy is the key to mainstreaming convergence, and not merely relegating it as an additional responsibility.

Systematic capacity building, whether training or mentoring, cultivate skills in engaging stakeholders and in networking. Further, this manages programmatic mindsets so that staff can go beyond the tendency to work in silos. As the Convergence Strategy evolves, new directives, guidelines, and memos are formulated and new protocols and tools are developed. Capacity building activities will not only update all staff of new developments but will also nurture their responses to challenges that they face on the ground.

DSWD personnel are hired per program and their TORs understandably shape their mindset. Thus, the orientation of new personnel should be steered towards the idea that convergence is the umbrella in which 4Ps/SLP/KC-NCDDP are lodged and that personnel are evaluated based on their convergence and programmatic deliverables. The IPC will also need revisions to explicitly provide for convergence deliverables preferably carrying a significant weight allocation so that the staff can embrace the Convergence Strategy from the beginning of their DSWD journey. In this orientation, the SWDI should also be explained and introduced as the basis of all interventions. This can minimize the development of programmatic biases of new staff.

119. **Strengthen collaboration with municipal LGUs by putting a face on success stories.** The cooperation of LCEs is key to achieving successful external Convergence Strategy. Some LCEs view the C/MAPs as additional tasks as these require additional

resources for interventions. The C/MATs should make extra efforts for municipal LGUs to realize that the DSWD is a partner with the same goal and the same client as municipal LGUs. The DSWD personnel should provide testimonies during MAC/MIAC meetings to showcase empowered beneficiaries (those who finished school, those who got good jobs, those who became entrepreneurs, or Parent Leaders who became part of the C/MAT). The contribution of beneficiaries (as additional labor, as agents of good solid waste management, or as leaders of environmental protection) in municipal LGU-led initiatives can also be highlighted. The C/MATs should work toward having the C/MAPs owned by the LGUs, preferably have this signed by the LCE. The DSWD CO can work with the DILG to ensure that C/MAT leaders are part of the teams that construct LPRATs to synergize these plans with the C/MAPs.

Some C/MATs also find it difficult to follow-up on the LCE commitments since they have positions much lower than the LCEs. DSWD staff and officials from the provinces, regions, and the CO should assist C/MATs in this case to improve LGU partnerships.

120. **Strengthen feedback channels and data-sharing to enhance strategic external partnership.** There is a room for further improvement to enhance strategic external partnership even when CMATs already appreciate external collaboration. Most stakeholders do not maintain a database that tags DSWD (particularly *Pantawid*) beneficiaries among their beneficiaries. It is also worthwhile to develop a system so that databases of strategic partners can be easily linked into databases maintained by DSWD. A starting point that can be explored is to strengthen the tracking of 4Ps beneficiaries by NGAs such as DA, DAR, DENR, DepED, and the sharing of these databases with NGAs to operationalize a WOG approach (subject to data sharing protocols that ensure confidentiality of personal data). This will reduce inefficiencies resulting from the manual tracking of services provided by external partners to beneficiaries and will improve the quality of services provided. The Department will need to boost its advocacy with other NGAs, and, to develop several mechanisms for all NGAs to have a WOG approach to improving people's welfare.

## Management of Critical Gaps in DSWD's Core Social Protection Programs

### A. Observations

1. **While business processes of the three core social protection programs of DSWD have been implemented independent of the Convergence Strategy, it is still important for DSWD to obtain feedback about critical gaps in the programs as a chain is as weak as its weakest link.** Primary data from field interviews have provided a sense of how beneficiaries and partners view these programs, from targeting systems, to designing and implementing projects, for household-focused programs. A few observations also have been made about the community-focused programs.
2. **Even though the basis of selection of beneficiaries for the 4Ps is clear and extensive validation was undertaken by DSWD, a common issue raised by stakeholders and beneficiaries is that there are other poor families, poorer than existing beneficiaries, who are not included in the 4Ps.** Some beneficiaries reported that some of the poor were not included because several interviews were conducted prior to 2009 and several poor families got tired of participating in surveys. When the 2009 interview for *Listahanan* took place, some poor families no longer participated in *Listahanan*, hence the exclusion. Some reasons for exclusions offered by field personnel include the following:
  - Enumerators sought the help of barangay captains, presumably the person with the most knowledge about the communities, and **exclusion can sometimes be a result of politics.** This claim is not entirely far-fetched since there were other reported incidents that were politically colored. For example, a C/MAT leader narrated an instance when the leader refused to sign the release of a grant because the grantee, close to the barangay captain, said she was sick but was actually in Manila. The barangay captain approached the leader to request for release of the grant, and when the leader refused to sign the release, the barangay captain elevated the case to the LCE.
  - **Information dissemination to communities as to when interviews are going to be held was inadequate.** If information on interviews was well disseminated ahead of time, there could have been better response rates.
  - **Misinformation could also have played a role in some exclusions.** Some beneficiaries reported that some indigenous people did not like to be included in *Listahanan* because they were misinformed that their children will be brought to America.

A few stakeholders also reported other (inclusion) errors on the NHTS-PR. They cited a case of a rich *sitio* where families are generally well off but live simple lives, yet some of these families are included in the 4Ps. However, it should be noted that the DSWD has had processes to handle inclusion and exclusion errors that stakeholders may not be aware of, once information on these errors is reported and verified. Further, for the latter case mentioned, there remains the possibility of having a few poor households in good neighborhoods, though DSWD should be performing social case work to investigate if there continue to be such inclusion error cases. DSWD needs to have a systematic mechanism of explaining to the public, particularly beneficiaries and partners, about how the Department corrects targeting errors, and the extent of correction (i.e. numbers of households delisted).

3. **Some stakeholders raised concerns on how the DSWD grants to households are used by the beneficiaries.** These stakeholders point out that proceeds of the *Pantawid* grants are not necessarily spent on children's needs. Some rural banks that serve as conduits for 4Ps payout observed that payouts are like fiestas where enterprising agents put up bazaars and where some people are openly collecting money that beneficiaries owe. This is also an observation shared by LCEs from other municipalities. A Public-School District Supervisor (PSDS) observed that some children from 4Ps families come to school without the necessary school supplies. The PSDS raised the feasibility of monitoring children's school supplies as well. However, the design of 4Ps recognizes that these families have many needs, and there are no conditions on how the cash grants are to be spent except restrictions on vices. Operations manuals of *Pantawid* mention that DSWD is supposed to give warnings to beneficiary families when money is misused, and say, spent on vices, and if repeat offenses are made, the beneficiaries are delisted. This needs to be communicated to beneficiaries and partners. Further, DSWD has to strengthen financial literacy among beneficiaries. Some stakeholders of SLP also reported that grants that are intended for entrepreneurial activities are used for other purposes. While DSWD discusses financial literacy during the FDS, it is unclear whether SLP grantees are also given some financial literacy training, and if there are processes, as in the 4Ps, for monitoring how grantees spend their grants, and for punishing those who deviate from protocols.
4. **Most representatives of municipal LGUs prefer the provision of skills training, as well as inputs and raw materials over financial assistance in SLP.** They observed that some SLP beneficiaries view government-funded programs as dole-outs and actually do not feel responsible to pay back the assistance. They also mentioned that other beneficiaries do not use the financial grants for entrepreneurial activities for their intended purpose.

5. **Monitoring the health co-responsibilities of the 4Ps is reportedly not regularly done in some Rural Health Units (RHUs).** For 4Ps beneficiaries to receive a health grant, they are expected to fulfill some conditions/co-responsibilities<sup>28</sup>. Some RHU personnel reported that there is no mechanism to monitor the beneficiaries' compliance to these conditions in their municipalities. They mentioned that previously, a booklet was filled out every time beneficiaries avail of RHU services, but this monitoring scheme is no longer used in their area. Consequently, with less monitoring, pregnant women are now less likely to seek prenatal checkup and mothers less likely to bring children to the RHU for regular check-up, vaccination, and deworming. These RHU personnel expressed deep concern over this lack of monitoring mechanisms since they also want to reduce, if not eliminate, maternal deaths and malnutrition in the community. As one of the major stakeholders in the 4Ps, the RHU personnel should be given a role for monitoring health co-responsibilities.
6. **Some RHU personnel reported that while pregnant women from 4Ps beneficiaries avail of pre-natal check-up in RHUs or state-run hospitals, these women sometimes give birth in private hospitals.** Although RHU personnel respect the rights of patients to choose where they get their health services from, the RHU personnel find it important for 4Ps beneficiaries to give birth in state-run hospitals since PhilHealth pays PhP8,000 to hospitals for every 4Ps member that gives birth in state-run hospitals/birthing facilities. RHU staff expressed their view that these monies should be captured by government hospitals that are in dire need of resources.
7. **Education conditionalities may need to be revised to discourage school repetition.** While repetition is not allowed for secondary school 4Ps beneficiaries, school repetition is not penalized in the primary school level for 4Ps beneficiaries. *Pantawid* beneficiaries at the primary level may not have the urgency to finish schooling. At the very least, they should be discouraged from having more than 1 repetition in primary school to instill a strong sense of valuation of the cash grant received by the beneficiary families.
8. **Cash grants on education for child beneficiaries continue to be uniform except for the difference in grants received between pre-primary and primary students, with that of secondary school students.** The 300 peso cash grants for education in the 4Ps were used for the pilot implementation of *Pantawid* in 2006. During that period, the maximum cash grants per household were simulated to be a fourth (23%) of household

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<sup>28</sup> Health co-responsibilities of the 4Ps beneficiaries include (i) pregnant women must avail of pre-natal and post-natal care and be attended during childbirth by a trained health professional; (ii) 0-2-year-old children must visit the health center every month; (iii) 3-5-year-old children must visit the health center every three months for check-up and vaccination; and, (iv) 6-14-year-old children must receive de-worming pills twice a year. See, e.g., Albert, et al., 2015.



income. Thus, as per design of the 4Ps, the grantees would not be extremely dependent on the *Pantawid* cash grants. However, by 2013, these cash grants have gone down to less than a tenth (7%) of household income on account of inflation. While currently, *Pantawid* provides secondary school students 500 peso grants in the wake of the difference in opportunity costs for school participation between the primary and secondary levels, the serious disparity in school participation rates between boys and girls of the same age has not been addressed. School participation is in favor of girls across ages, with the disparity very pronounced among secondary school age children, and yet the cash grants in Pantawid are uniform regardless of sex. Several studies (e.g., Albert *et al.* 2015; David and Albert, 2015) have already suggested the need for DSWD to provide extra cash incentives for boys, especially in the secondary level, to address gender disparities in school participation.

9. **A number of stakeholders, including the beneficiaries themselves, observed that the current 4Ps beneficiaries are not the only poor people in the community.** While the targeting system of the 4Ps is far from perfect, and has inclusion and exclusion errors, it should also be pointed that people move in and move out of poverty. The last *Listahanan* exercise suggested that some beneficiary families moved out of poverty, but this does not necessarily mean they cannot move back into poverty. The 4Ps, however, is a program that will have its end, particularly when all beneficiary children finish high school or reach age 18, whatever comes first. Some stakeholders, especially current 4Ps beneficiaries, mentioned the desirability of continuing the 4Ps for other set of poor families who have not been *Pantawid* beneficiaries.
10. **A few CSOs reported the lack of regard for the environment in some communities, with the continuing cutting of trees.** In the wake of effects of growing greenhouse gas emissions, which leads to climate change, and in turn, to disruptive effects on people's lives, property and livelihood, it has been suggested that 4Ps beneficiaries become active agents of change in their communities. FDS modules on environmental protection and climate change may be conducted more frequently to instill a stronger importance for the environment.

- 11. While FDS has successfully reduced redundancy of topics and the Convergence Strategy has managed to synchronize FDS with the BAs, further efforts are needed to effect behavioral changes among program beneficiaries.** Issues and problems vary across families within a given community. Some stakeholders observed that FDS sessions may not be very effective, as sessions are not customized to cater to specific local issues/problems and that the FDS do not always account for the culture in the community. A similar point was raised regarding Youth Development Sessions (YDS). A stakeholder from an upland area noticed that YDS on drugs is not relevant in their area since youth in the uplands are highly unlikely to have ever seen any type of prohibited drugs. The stakeholder pointed out that teenage pregnancy is a more relevant issue in their area, but this has hardly been taken up during YDS.
- 12. While the SLP has had its share of successful projects and has conducted many training programs, many training activities did not translate or have not yet translated into sustainable enterprises for trainees.** Several successful SLP projects involve either the provision of training, inputs or seed capital, or a combination either to improve entrepreneurial capabilities or enhance skills and competence for employment. These success stories include a dress-making project in Jovellar, Albay, support for sari-sari stores in Donsol, Sorsogon; Motiong, Western Samar; and Kibungan, Benguet. Skills and know-how that are harnessed through experience prior to the SLP projects appear to be common elements of these success stories.

Interviews among stakeholders and field staff suggest that while the SLP has sponsored many training activities on dressmaking, *tocino*-making, bag-making, food processing, and ginger tea-making, outcomes on sustainable livelihood have yet to get realized. In some municipalities, one reason behind this is the lack of required materials in the community while other materials are available only in Manila. In addition, there is a mismatch between the beneficiaries' abilities and the training provided. For instance, in one municipality, SLP beneficiaries noted that the book-keeping training provided to them was too technical and was not helpful in their *sari-sari* enterprises. In another municipality, an international level training on making bags was provided to beneficiaries, but the outputs produced were not of international level quality. Further, some C/MAT leaders reported that SLP activities are time-bound such that training activities are given merely to those who are available during the time of training and are not targeted properly.

SLP training should be arising from actual training needs assessment and from the conduct of feasibility studies. SLP-PDOs should examine the readiness and absorptive capabilities of SLP beneficiaries in catering to big markets. Further, SLP activities will need to be well grounded on what people actually need.

13. **Although the SLP provides not only training but also materials and inputs for entrepreneurial activities, there remain questions on whether what is being supported actually leads to sustainable livelihood.** For example, in poultry and hog-raising, there are no clear guidelines to deal with risks regarding sustaining the livestock. A LCE reported that there were cases of heatstroke among the hogs being raised by the beneficiaries. When the LCE inquired about actions to be taken, the DSWD staff said that the hogs will be replaced but no clear solutions were provided on how to cope with threats to sustaining the entrepreneurial project. A similar incident was also reported in a goose-raising project. When most of the geese died, beneficiaries were simply asked if they wanted chicken as replacements.

14. **Several perspectives shed some light on issues related to the lack of successful outcomes from SLP training and projects.**

- Some beneficiaries reported that **training/livelihood projects** were **given** to them **without prior consultation about their needs and capabilities**, while others claimed that these were given to meet the targets of SLP-PDOs.
- There are also reported cases of **mismatch** between the **skills of beneficiaries** and the **livelihood inputs** provided by the SLP. In one municipality, an electric sewing machine was provided to an association of beneficiaries to start a rug enterprise. This project did not push through since grantees did not know how to operate the machines. In addition, stakeholders reported that some SLP projects are not suitable to the demands of the local and regional market. For example, the LCE in a GIDA mentioned that he wonders whether a poultry project can be sustained as there has been no feasibility study to assess the demand for poultry products whether within their area, or outside their locale.
- **Some associations that were formed for purposes of livelihood work only at the beginning of the SLP project fizzled out.** Some SLP projects have provided seed capital and start-up funds for group initiatives where proponents are asked to form an association with 15-20 members. Eventually, group members took their share and used the money for purposes other than for the intended enterprise.
- **Market-related issues, such as the reliability of supply and demand, pose significant challenges for the SLP.** On one hand, beneficiaries engaged in agriculture have some difficulties in finding markets for their produce. Due to transportation and hauling costs, harvests of some municipalities are more expensive than other municipalities that are closer to the market. On the other hand, those who find markets run into difficulties to meet their clients' demands. For example, some resorts agreed to buy the beneficiaries' produce. However, there were times when the quantity and the timing of supply did not meet the resorts' expectations. Similar issues arise for beneficiaries engaged in

handicrafts. During interviews, they mentioned that they were commissioned to produce abaca handicrafts for exports but they were not able to meet the quantity demanded due to quality issue. Since then, abaca handicrafts are marketed for local consumption only. While some LCEs are supportive of the beneficiaries' enterprises and are willing to provide them a place in municipal LGU-operated facilities, the fact that beneficiaries do not issue receipts become an issue.

- While some beneficiaries noted that SLP-PDO was good at monitoring, they report challenges in making the project work due to the distance of the beneficiaries' homes from the livelihood sites (e.g., piggeries and poultry sites).

**15. The DSWD may have to do serious stocktaking on whether providing livelihood assistance is something the Department is competent to pursue.** Some stakeholders reported that certain SLP projects are likely to take years to yield results, and that some SLP-PDOs may not have a full grasp of what will and will not work given limited immersion and consultation. In one municipality, beneficiaries reported that the project was conceptualized by the SLP-PDO in consultation only with the barangay captain. In some municipalities, the livelihood projects were already in place and SLP personnel just asked beneficiaries if they wanted to avail of them. SLP staff should recognize that needs and problems differ depending on location (coastal, upland, GIDA) and on existing norms and culture. An in-depth understanding of these localized needs and issues will help in the successful conduct of the projects. DSWD will need to work more hand in hand with partners and communities on what may work.

**16. Despite differences in preferences over employment or enterprise, all beneficiaries expressed their desire to have a regular stream of income.** When beneficiaries are asked whether they want regular employment or an enterprise, some preferred regular employment since this ensures steady stream of income. Enterprises, such as hog-fattening or poultry-raising, take time to realize profits. The possibility of deaths of livestock and natural disasters can slow the process further. However, they recognized that employment available to them is mostly seasonal and the possibility of being out of work during the year is high. Some preferred enterprises that will allow them to earn and take care of their children. Others did not like jobs far from their homes.

**17. Field interviewees also identified some gaps in the KC-NCDDP implementation, including the following:**

- Some municipal LGUs prefer KC-NCDDP over 4Ps since the former has some personal positive externalities to the LCEs. Firstly, KC-NCDDP outputs can be used to support some LCEs' future political aspirations. Secondly, there are

some municipalities where LCEs influence the procurement process because some are contractors (through dummy names).

- Since KC-NCDDP has the community as the focus of intervention, the selection of some projects in some municipalities sometimes depend on how persistent and vocal the advocates of the project are. Field interviewees in some municipalities noted that there should be a systematic method of choosing projects.
- Some KC-NCDDP staff were transferred to another municipalities even though some projects were not yet finished. This was a cause of concern for MSWDOs since this could delay the completion of some administrative requirements.
- There are some *Pantawid* volunteers that eventually get absorbed as workers in KC-NCDDP projects. However, there were cases when payments were delayed due to issues on documents (e.g. incompletely or incorrectly filled) and these discouraged some beneficiaries to participate in the KC-NCDDP projects.

## **B. Recommendations**

**18. Strengthen values formation of beneficiaries through the FDS/YDS and ensure that topics are locally relevant.** FDS/YDS have provided a forum for beneficiaries to get empowered through information. Beneficiaries report that FDS/YDS have contributed to their personal and family life. But while FDS/YDS have achieved milestones, and also improved its content delivery (in terms of reducing redundancy of topics), further efforts are required to instill values formation. For FDS/YDS to be effective, C/MATs should have meaningful sessions that discuss issues/problems specifically important to the community. Further, sessions should also be adapted to account for the culture of the community. C/MATs should thus identify common problems faced by families in an area. In addition, fragmented topics for FDS/YDS should be avoided. Programming mindsets is easier if discussions revolve around well-defined objectives that address pressing needs.

**19. Explore possible amendments to co-responsibilities of *Pantawid* beneficiaries and ensure that these co-responsibilities are strictly enforced.** The DSWD may need to examine its position regarding allowing repetitions in the primary school system for 4Ps beneficiaries. At the very least, primary school beneficiaries could only be given up to one year to repeat a grade throughout the primary school level in order to instill a strong sense of importance of the grant received. Further, this prepares the beneficiaries when they get into high school and are not allowed to repeat any year.

In addition, the Department can explore the use of Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) initiatives that support pro-poor climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction by strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations to shocks (Davies *et al.*, 2009). In these initiatives, the poor and the unemployed are given assistance with the

condition of protecting ecosystems. *Pantawid* strengthens human capital but the Program does not explicitly address risks associated with climate change (Dacuycuy and Baje, 2017). ASP can take the form of integrating environmental protection as part of the FDS, including planting X number of trees each year, beach reforestation, or the management of household solid wastes.

20. **Provide extra cash benefits for boys among *Pantawid* beneficiaries to address current gender disparities in school participation in favor of girls.** This strategy can be made on a pilot basis, especially in selected regions where the disparities are strongest, with a strong M&E to look into unintended consequences, and examine the possibility of having this intervention stopped when disparities have been minimized, if not eliminated. Gender equality is not merely empowerment of females, but rather the provision of equal opportunities, regardless of sex. Given that people respond to incentives, it would be important for DSWD to make use of the resources in *Pantawid* to ensure better equity in school participation not only for the poor (versus non-poor), and for the secondary school children (versus children in pre-primary and primary education), but also for boys given the higher opportunity losses in school participation relative to girls.
21. **Complementing SWDI results with feasibility studies and immersion for SLP interventions.** Field interviewees report that while SLP provides a lot of training courses, most of these did not result in trainees getting into sustainable enterprises because of the lack of raw materials and the mismatch of skills and training. Further, several livelihood projects reportedly failed due to mismatch of skills and raw material provided, issues on the distance of the beneficiaries' homes from livelihood project sites, and the use of capital for purposes other than for the intended entrepreneurial activities. Some livelihood projects failed due to deaths of livestock. Other projects have yet to realize profits. Those that have seen material outputs have encountered market-related problems.

Since SLP projects/trainings are reportedly based on SWDI results, these problems suggest either that the SWDI cannot by itself provide a picture of needed interventions, or field staff do not have enough capacity to understand what is needed, or both. For SLP livelihood/training projects to be impactful, SLP personnel need to understand what will and will not work through immersion and consultation. Needs and problems differ depending on location (coastal, upland, GIDA) and on existing norms. DSWD personnel need to supplement SWDI with immersion, feasibility studies and marketing studies.

**22. Encourage and incentivize Social Enterprises to put up businesses in partnership with SLP.** The business sector does not seem to be involved in the SLP. Beneficiaries want a steady stream of income, but due to limited skills and training, they recognize that getting jobs in the formal labor market is challenging. The role of Social Enterprises (SE), which use local knowledge and local resources to address not only financial but also social and environmental issues within the community, could be harnessed. SE, compared to for-profit enterprises and nonprofit organizations, put communities at the center of their enterprises with the objectives of promoting social welfare, enabling sustainable development, and encouraging investments for empowering communities (Ballesteros and Llanto, 2017). The SLP, through its Employment Facilitation track, can be linked with SEs by incentivizing them to put up enterprises for communities where SLP is in place.

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