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Assessment of Implementation Issues and Livelihood Success on the Sustainable Livelihood Program of the DSWD

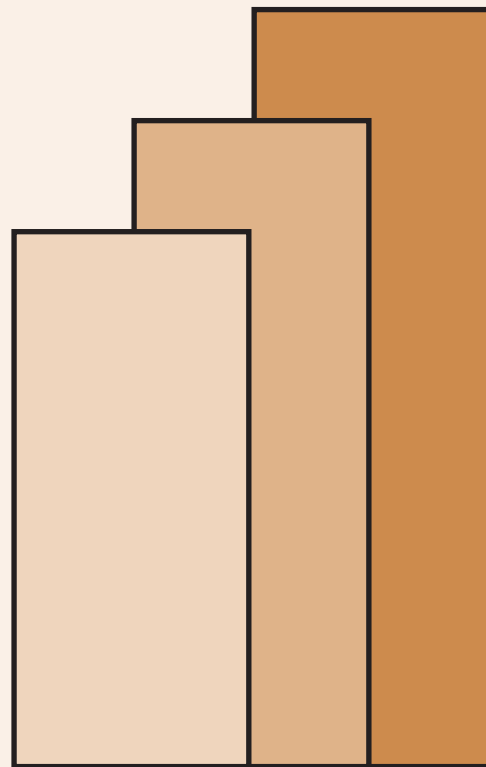
Marife M. Ballesteros et al.

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Assessment of Implementation Issues and Livelihood Success on the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the DSWD

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PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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Abstract

The study aims to assess the sustainable livelihood program (SLP) implementation processes based on recent policy enhancements and indicators of program success. The analysis is based on focus group discussions and key informant interviews and a survey of a small sample of beneficiaries. Majority of those served by the program have expressed positive results from the SLP intervention particularly when it comes to skills training. There is a felt improvement in the standard of living experienced from additional household income, business expansion and a stable source of employment. Other dimensions of success include increased motivation to be productive; better links to employment or that the program provided a form of social protection. However, beneficiary targeting is poor with Parent Leaders, their friends and relatives capturing most of the benefits. Delays in project review and approval caused potential beneficiaries to drop out; backed-out or find other opportunities. Moreover, the establishment of SLP associations is viewed as a deterrent instead of a mechanism for success. Overall, DSWD should pay attention to five management issues: One, strengthen the role of the CCG or internal convergence in participant and project identification. Two, enhance PDOs capacity. Third, innovate ways for track selection and participant profiling through development of characteristic-based assessment tool on beneficiary readiness and capacities. Fourth, improve the process of project review to shorten the waiting time for approval. Fifth, develop the SLP M&E. It is essential for data analysis, transparency and policy enhancement. An impact evaluation has to be undertaken to provide better evidence of program success.

Keywords: livelihood, microenterprise, employment, poverty, sustainable livelihood

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Assessment of Implementation Issues and Livelihood Success on the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the DSWD

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1. Background and Objectives of the Study

In 2011, DSWD launched the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) to provide livelihood assistance to poor, primarily *Pantawid* households. The livelihood assistance is in the form of microenterprise development (MD) and employment facilitation (EF). The MD track is derived from the previous SEA-K (Self Employment Assistance Kaunlaran) program of the DSWD, a microcredit program that provides small loans to the poor to encourage entrepreneurial activity and savings generation. On the other hand, the EF track is patterned after the DOLE strategy of job matching and skills training to facilitate employment.

In the initial years of the SLP, rapid assessments were undertaken to look into the development of community driven enterprises that will improve the participation of households and link communities to markets and financial institutions (PinoyME 2011). The PIDS also provided an earlier assessment of the implementation processes of the SEA-K and EF track in 2014 and 2015, respectively (Ballesteros, et.al 2014; Ballesteros, et al. 2015). The assessment studies noted the need to improve the delivery of program services and to assess DSWD's capacity, especially its field personnel, to perform both microcredit and employment facilitation activities at the same time. It was also reported that beneficiaries primarily choose their own tracks to participate in either the microenterprise or employment track. DSWD does not have characteristic-based criteria to determine whether a beneficiary is appropriate for a specific track.

DSWD adopted some policy changes thereafter to enhance program implementation. One major reform was the strengthening of the community driven development. Instead of simply resource-based and market driven initiatives, the community development efforts are now focused on results-based innovations and sustainable interventions. Guided participation, internal convergence and multi-stakeholder approach are given greater emphasis. This also changed the design of track selection and project identification from one that is beneficiary driven to one that is guided by the Community Core group (CCG), which is barangay-based volunteer group composed of organizations and persons in the locality.

Another major change was the shift from a microcredit scheme to a capacity building strategy for those in the MD track. The seed capital fund is given in the form of grants to organized group of beneficiaries to build entrepreneurial skills and the savings capacity of members. Group enterprises are strongly encouraged as well as other activities that will help build cohesion within groups.

For the EF track, the DSWD has strengthened partnerships with both public and private manpower services and training institutions especially those that are link to employment in the private sector. DSWD also encouraged higher outputs for the EF track. The low take-up rate for employment among *Pantawid* households has been reported in the earlier studies. This was found surprising because employment is usually preferred by households since it is associated with lower risk than microenterprise. This view has also been supported by the labor force

data.¹ To address the issue of low take-up, DSWD set the proportion for EF outputs to 45% of total SLP outputs from a low of 20% based on actual performance for four years since the start of SLP.

This second round of SLP assessment is undertaken to examine the implementation of the new sets of protocol and comparing them with the old one. It also considers the MD and EF tracks as interdependent livelihood choices under the SLP such that the sorting of beneficiaries into tracks is a process that would likely affect the outputs because beneficiary characteristics would influence the chances of livelihood success. The paper also examines indicators of livelihood success and how these indicators are reflected in the program based on actions displayed by the beneficiaries and the experience gained in the implementation of the program.

The paper is organized as follows, Section II presents an overview of the SLP and the policy reforms that have taken place to enhance program processes. Section III presents the methodology of the study. Sections IV to VIII discusses the roles, assumptions, obstacles, and issues of SLP key stakeholders and how these have influenced program implementation and outputs. Section IX examines the concepts of livelihood success and relate them to SLP outcomes. The last section concludes and recommends policies/strategies to improve SLP.

2. Overview of SLP and Policy Reforms

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) is one of the social protection programs that supports Pantawid beneficiaries and other poor and vulnerable families to enable them to attain economic sufficiency. The main strategy of SLP is the provision of livelihood to the targeted families by helping individual members of these families to develop income-generating microenterprises or to gain access to employment. This intervention is expected to contribute to the goal of economic sufficiency defined in terms of improvement in employable skills, employment opportunities, income, social security and access to financial institutions.

In particular, SLP assistance to marginalized households consists of capacity building activities, skills training, job coaching and financial support. These activities are intended to enable SLP beneficiaries to have quality livelihood or jobs and increased incomes. DSWD developed several indicators of success to assess these program goals. The intermediate outcomes are measured in terms of the number of SLP participants who have or are involved in a microenterprise with ongoing business operations for Microenterprise Development (MD) and number of SLP participants who are employed for EF. On the other hand, the end of program outcome is measured in terms of the percentage of SLP participants involved in an active microenterprise, i.e., has ongoing business operations for the past 3 months and not operating at lost. For the EF participants, the indicators are: 1) have a regular or permanent job, or 2) have worked for at least 4 months (at least 704 hours) during the past 6 months, and 3) are currently working and have worked for at least 3 consecutive months (at least 528 hours).

The SLP results chain shows how the different inputs and activities of SLP are linked together to achieve the intended impact of the program (**Figure 1**).

The Project Development Officers (PDOs) are the key implementers of the SLP. They are responsible for carrying out program implementation from service delivery to results

¹ Based on PSA labor force survey (April 2014 round) more than half of our labor force (57.5%) consists of wage and salary workers and only one-third are self-employed.

monitoring and assessment. Recently, DSWD removed from the PDOs' functions the task of monitoring and evaluation and engaged another PDO to handle primarily the monitoring activities. Thus, the PDOs are now classified as Implementing PDOs (IPDOs) and Monitoring PDOs (MPDOs). The IPDOs are in charge of service delivery and of facilitating the development of enterprises and employment of program participants while the MPDOs are responsible for assessing the livelihood projects of SLP served participants and identifying follow-through interventions. This change in tasking is already reflected in the proposed 2017 SLP FOM.

Aside from the PDOs, the co-implementers of the program include the: *Pantawid Pamilya City/Municipal Link (C/ML)*, *KC-National Community-Driven Development Program (KC-NCDDP) Area Coordinator (AC)*, who are implementers from other DSWD core programs. The *City/Municipal Action Team (C/MAT)* consists of representatives from its core programs (SLP, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, and Kalahi-CIDSS-NCDDP). The *Community Core Group (CCG)*² is a barangay-based volunteer group organized to provide support to the PDO for the identification of areas, participants, and projects as well as in project implementation and monitoring. This internal convergence of DSWD social programs aims to provide more effective and efficient implementation of different initiatives that are directed towards the same goal of improving the level of well-being of the poor communities and families.

The DSWD SLP organizational structure is hierarchical consisting of three levels- the *National Program Management Office (NPMO)*, the SLP office based at the DSWD Central Office that manages the overall program implementation the *Regional Program Management Office (RPMO)*, the SLP office that manages the Field Offices/Staff responsible for program implementation within a region; and the *Provincial Coordinators that are assigned to each Regional Office (PC)* that coordinates SLP activities within the province. The Provincial Coordinators serve as managers and team leaders of Field PDOs. The PDOs work closely with the co-implementers in acquiring data on their targets and engaging with the community and LGUs.

SLP has six main stages of implementation which are: 1) Area Identification, 2) Participant Identification, 3) Project Identification, 4) Project Review and Approval, 5). Project Implementation, and 6) Monitoring and Evaluation (2015 SLP FOM). Note that there have been changes in how these stages are defined overtime but the activities are practically similar (**Table 1**). Also, under the proposed 2017 SLP FOM the stages are to be compressed into five whereby the first three stages in the 2015 FOM i.e., Area, Participant and Project identification are combined into the Social Preparation stage.

The first set of SLP activities, which is the area, participant, and project identification, is essentially the first three stages of the program. These three stages are considered simultaneously. A single project cycle usually takes more than a year. The Area, Participant and Project Identification stages occurs during the second semester of the prior year while the Project Implementation happens in the first semester of the current year followed by project monitoring on the second semester of the current year (**Figure 2**).

². The CCG may be composed of the C/MAT, Pantawid Pamilya Parent Leaders, old SKA Officers, Barangay Sub-Project Management Committee (BSPMC) leaders, cooperative leaders, and Barangay Health Workers/Barangay Nutrition Scholars. Other local community members may also become part of the CCG.

In the Area Identification, priority areas are identified based on the existing opportunities and the capacities or resources of the possible participants in the area. The target participants are the *Pantawid Pamilya* families but *Non-Pantawid Pamilya* families that are identified as poor families based on the *Listahan* may still be covered by the program. In the future, the DSWD plans to also include those who are not listed in the *Listahan* Database but are poor based on a proxy means test methodology administered by the DSWD (2017 SLP FOM).

For Project Identification, the priority projects are based on project viability and sustainability, given the location or proximity to the intended market and the resources of the target participants. Before the actual identification, sufficient data collection and analysis on markets and resources are undertaken by PDOs together with the City/Municipal Link (C/ML) and Area Coordinator (AC).

SLP also builds on partnerships with the private sector and other government agencies to assess markets and job opportunities. PDOs partner with Public Employment Service Office (PESO) offices of local government units for labor market information on both local and overseas employment. They may also directly partner with private employers or national government agencies (e.g. DPWH) to know potential skills requirement and job opportunities in specific industries. Training institutes are also considered co-implementers since these institutions provide for skills training and link their graduates to jobs.

After the data collection and analysis, the PDOs should be able to come up with an Opportunity Identification Matrix that identifies the market opportunities and the resources in the target area (**Table 2**). The first step would be collecting data on markets (labor, product, and service market opportunities) and resources (human, social, natural, physical, and financial) aside from the number of families in each level of well-being, names and their basic profiles. The data on internal market opportunities consist of the Barangay profiles from KC-NCDDP PSA/BA, the list of KC-NCDDP sub-projects, employment and market opportunities, Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) especially market opportunities therein, and other employment opportunities in the different units of DSWD. The data on external market opportunities are based on the availability of job opportunities within the barangay or in easily accessible barangays that can be obtained from the PESO, Local DOLE office or PHIL-JobNet. It also includes data from the local business registry and/or the local DTI office on available market opportunities within the barangay or in other easily accessible barangays. The rural/urban classification of the barangay can also give additional information on the level of economic activity in the area. The data on resources can be based on the list of (Bottoms-UP Budgeting) BUB and PAMANA areas and planned projects, in order to pool together existing resources for the implementation of similar projects; municipal profile and local economic development plan, annual investment plan, other national and local government programs and services; presence of prominent local CSOs, NGOs, POs, etc.; land use and crop information, and; visual map of city/municipality and its barangays with the corresponding road networks and major institutions, establishments, and infrastructure. The above information are organized into a matrix such that the opportunities identified are matched with the corresponding available resources that would be combined to meet the demand as seen in Table 2.

To identify the actual barangays and participants to be targeted for the priority opportunities, the Barangay Ranking Matrix (**Table 3**) is used. The first step would be to acquire the list of all barangays in the city/municipality, and the number of Pantawid Pamilya families in each level of well-being from the C/MAT. The indicative number of participants from each barangay who can participate in each project concept should be identified. Project concepts are based on

the priority opportunities from the Opportunity Identification Matrix. The ranking is based on the total number of *Pantawid Pamilya* family members who fit the profiles of the target participants of all the priority opportunities. In the 2017 FOM, the barangay identification has now more criteria than the previous FOM. Among the additional criteria are the density of unserved 4Ps and non-4Ps households, the availability of natural resources, the presence civil society, etc.

The PDOs with the help of the C/ MAT drafts the project proposals based on the opportunity identification matrix. As part of the community validation and consultation, the City/Municipal Action Team (C/MAT) would then have to orient the key stakeholders (Pantawid Pamilya Parent Leaders, Barangay Sub-Project Management Committee [BSPMC] leaders, local officials, barangay health workers, representatives from cooperatives) of the barangays regarding SLP. Another responsibility of the C/MAT is to find appropriate set of interventions for those participants who will not be covered under the priority projects. Only after all the proposals are concurred by the city/municipal stakeholders can they be submitted to the PC and the RPMO for approval. There are moves within DSWD to strengthen area, participant and project identification by requiring the Implementing PDOs to undergo community integration aside from the community validation and consultation. In the community integration, the IPDOs have to reside in the community for 2-3 weeks to gain knowledge of the context, and get the trust and respect of the community (Proposed 2017 SLP FOM).

For track selection, the process starts with the CCG identifying members of the Pantawid families who fit the target participant profiles for a proposed project concept (2015 SLP FOM). The profile of all the Pantawid family members are obtained from City/Municipal Link database and the individuals who have potential for employment or enterprise are identified. The identified participants are then gathered and given orientation on SLP and the proposed projects for their barangay. By the end of the meeting, the PDOs get the confirmation and willingness of the participants to participate in the proposed projects that are fit for them. The PDOs has to provide a list of participants per project to be able to finalize their project proposals.

However, there are significant variations on the indicated process in the field. Based on actual implementation, the practice is that the participants choose their track after a general orientation. After track selection, the PDOs organize a detailed orientation about SLP and the proposed projects under the MD and EF tracks for their barangay. Before the orientation ends, the participants who are willing to undergo the activities are asked to select which track they want to take and sign-up on which particular project they want to join or in the case of the MD track suggest their own enterprise. From this orientation, the PDOs come up with a list of participants and the final project proposals.

The 2017 SLP FOM proposed to adopt this practice instead of the process under the 2015 SLP FOM. The participants will decide on their preferred track after a general orientation and all those willing to participate in SLP undergo the Basic Microenterprise Development Training (BMMT) whether they choose the MD or EF track. The BMMT is primarily designed to orient the participants the basics on how to handle finances and the value of savings (i.e. financial management seminar).

The SLP has four modalities or methods of providing interventions to its participants, which are: Skills Training (ST), Pre-Employment Assistance Fund (PEAF), Cash for Building

Livelihood Assets (CBLA) and Seed Capital Fund (SCF). The CBLA and the SCF are exclusive for those under the MD track while PEAFF is primarily a support for those in the EF track.

The CBLA is a microenterprise cum employment program that is intended to build, re-build and/or protect natural and physical/entrepreneurial assets of the association. Individuals from Pantawid households who are selected to participate in the construction receive a cash stipend equivalent to 75% of the prevailing daily regional minimum wage for their work. Thus, in the initial phase, it is also considered as short-term employment.

The SCF is a capacity grant to SLP associations to provide start-up or additional financial capital for members of the association and to support the setting up of a community-based credit and savings facility. The business may be individually managed or set-up as a group enterprise. The maximum amount of SCF is P10,000, which will be increased to P15,000 upon approval of the 2017 FOM.

The PEAFF is a cash support to those under the EF track to help beneficiaries with guaranteed employment acquire the prerequisite requirements for the job.

In contrast to the CBLA and SCF, skills training can be availed by both MD and EF participants. The fund allotted per participant is P20,000 which will be reduced to P15,000 per participant upon approval of the proposed 2017 FOM. The rationale is to use the fund to finance mainly the core training. Currently, the training fund also includes the cost of starter kits.

The second set of SLP activities is the Project Review, Approval, and Implementation. Before the proposals are endorsed to the Field Office, they should first be approved by the Provincial Coordinator (PC). A Provincial Project Development and Assessment Workshop is conducted where PDOs discuss their project proposals. During the workshop, enhancements are made based on the PCs and other stakeholders' feedbacks. The Regional Program Coordinator (RPC) or other Field Office (FO)-based staff may also be invited. The PDOs shall then finalize the proposals based on the feedbacks to be endorsed by the PC to the Field Office for approval. The RPMO provides recommendation and submits to the Central Office for approval of funding. The RPMO will then inform the PCs once the proposals are approved, which will then be relayed to the PDOs. The PDO, assisted by the PC and the FO-based RPMO staff, shall ensure that all the project components that need to undergo the procurement process do so. The expected outputs from this process are: Notice of Award, Notice to Proceed (for competitive bidding), Purchase Order (for alternative modes of bidding), or Resolution and Contract (for agency-to-agency), and Obligation Request.

While waiting for the approval, the PDO and the CCG does regular consultation and planning sessions with the other participants to continually develop the projects. It is also during this time that the participants are provided with additional social preparations before they undergo the activities. For those who are set to undergo employment, they are oriented on the basics of job application and work ethics. For those who are set to be part of a group enterprise, they are guided in the process of group formation and business planning. They learn how to work well with others in the operation of business. They are also guided as they elect their officers and formulate their group policies and regulations and come up with a business plan. The PDOs and the CCG may tap other local partners for the sessions as resource persons- e.g. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), academic institutions, MFIs, faith-based organizations, etc. Currently, only the MD track participants are organized into SLP Associations. It is being proposed that

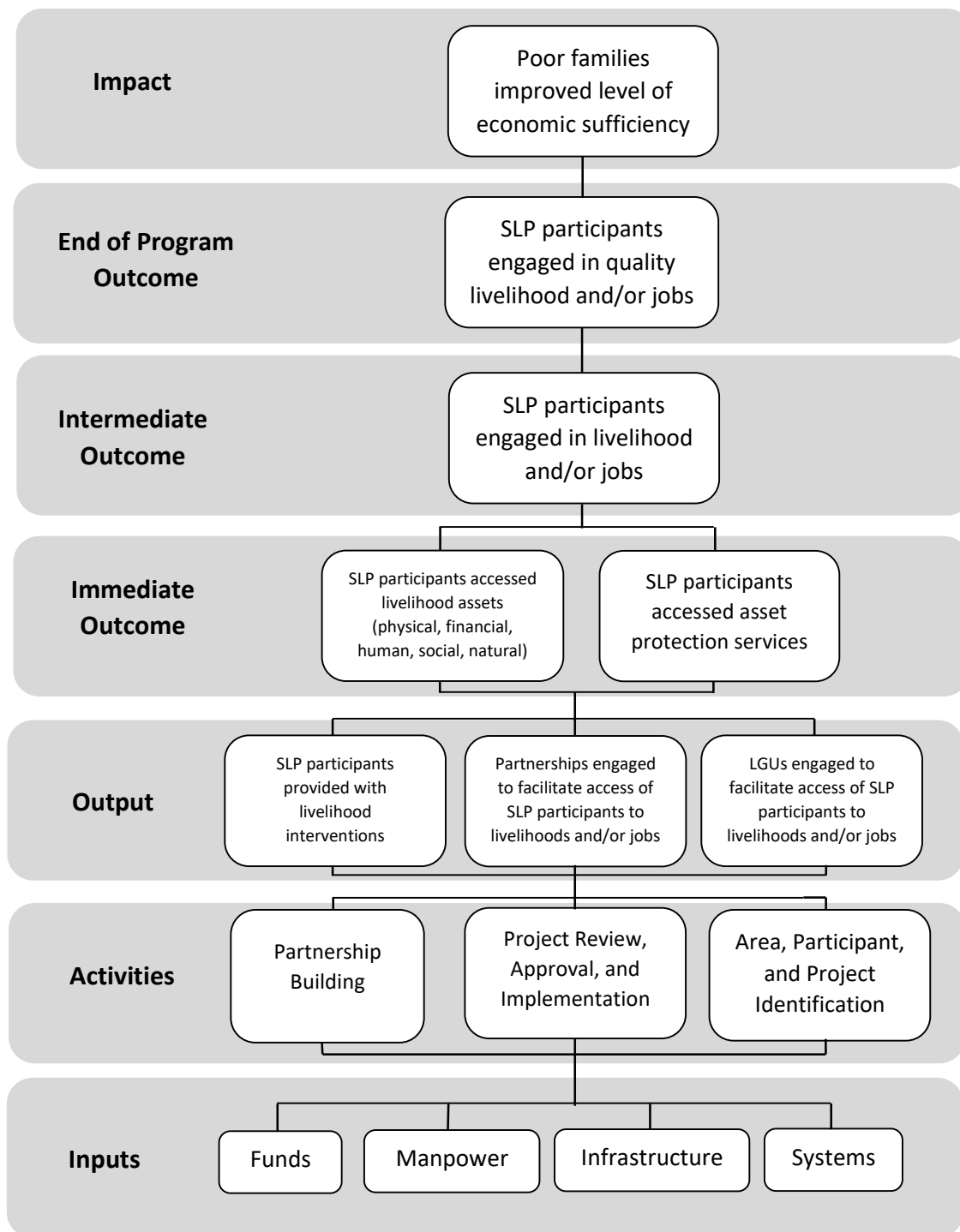
EF participants should also form SLP associations (2017 SLP FOM) but this may not be feasibility given mobility of those employed.

The last stage of the SLP is monitoring and evaluation. M&E aims to measure and analyze accomplishments based on desired outcomes and to improve program implementation. The monitoring PDOs are the primary data collector and end user. They are responsible for the development of database using indicators that measures the immediate, intermediate and end of program outcomes identified in the results chain. They also provide follow through intervention measures for better impact.

The PDOs use Field Monitoring Forms and encode the data content in the SLP Information System (SLPIS). The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer for Operations and Finance then processes all the data gathered and identifies problems and issues based on the trends in the data. Reports are then prepared by the Field Offices for compliance, data sharing for internal/external convergence and for transparency and accountability. Also, these reports can be used as basis for the next cycle's implementation. The results-based monitoring and evaluation (RBME) is crucial in improving the implementation of the program.

This monitoring strategy is already in place in several SLP areas. The DSWD has engage the services of Monitoring PDOs (MPDOs) to undertake post-SLP assistance tracking, technical assistance, and coordinating functions previously handled by the Implementing PDO. Monitoring will be done for two years, in which time, the program participants are able to scale up their business operations and become self-governing.

Figure 1. SLP Results Chain



Source of Flowchart: DSWD's SLP Monitoring Sub-Manual.

Table 1. SLP Key Processes and Enhanced Policies and Success Indicators, 2011-2017

	2011	2014	2015 SLP FOM	Proposed 2017 SLP FOM DRAFT
Goal	Enabling the poor to manage sustainable microenterprises and linking them to locally-available jobs to enhance their access to basic social services and improve standard of living	Facilitating or linking the poor households to economic opportunities to transition them from survival to self-sufficiency	Providing the poor income generating opportunities to help improve their level of economic sufficiency	Creating an enabling environment for the poor to access income generating opportunities to address basic needs, thereby improving their socio-economic well-being
Principles	Development of resource-based and market-driven ventures to improve economic viability and profitability of microenterprises Promotion of diversified microenterprises by having primary and secondary	Implemented through CDED using the concepts of resource-based and market driven principles to meet program’s deliverables Internal convergence with other core social protection programs of DSWD	Results-based innovations Sustainable interventions Guided participation Multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder approach Internal convergence	People-centeredness, Sustainability, Empowerment, Gender-sensitivity and -responsiveness, Rights-based, Participatory, Multi-disciplinary, Multi-stakeholder, Transparency, Inclusivity, Market-driven, Resource-based and Internal Convergence
Target Participants	Poor HHs as identified through the NHTS-PR prioritizing Pantawid Pamilya	Eligible individual/s representing a Pantawid Pamilya household. Eligible individual/s listed by NHTS-PR and other qualified poor households	Pantawid Pamilya families; family member(s) who is (are) most capable and willing to undergo the program activities Non-Pantawid Pamilya families that are identified as poor families based on the Listahanan Non-Pantawid Pamilya families that are not included in the Listahanan but with certificate of	Same as 2015 Coverage of non-4Ps families, who are not included in the Listahanan database, would be determined through a proxy means test that indicates whether they are poor (using the Household Assessment Form)

			indigency or part of a vulnerable group (e.g. PWDs, older persons, OSYs, disaster-affected)	
Area Identification	Target areas are barangays that were first served under the 4Ps program. Pantawid beneficiaries were identified based on sets. SLP prioritized areas with Set 1 and Set 2 Pantawid beneficiaries	The selection of barangays based on the number of 4Ps families regardless of the period the families were considered 4Ps beneficiaries.	The selection of barangays to be targeted is based on the total number of 4Ps family members.	Barangay targets based on the following criteria: (1) density of unserved 4Ps and non-4Ps households (50%); (2) availability of natural resources (15%); (3) presence of DSWD programs and other national or local government development programs, projects, and activities (15%); (4) accessibility of the barangays to the poblacion or commercial areas and formal financing institutions (10%); and (5) civil society (CSOs, NGOs, business sector) involvement and assistance provided for the community (10%)
Tracks	Track 1: Resource-Based and Market Driven Sustainable Microenterprise Track 2: Guaranteed Employment and Job Network Service	Track 1: Microenterprise Development (MD) Track 2: Employment Facilitation (EF)	Same as 2014	Same as 2014
Project Review and Approval Process	Approving Authority: SLP-NPMO Duration: Part of the Resource Mobilization stage which is 1 month	Same as 2011	Approving Authority: DSWD Field Office Regional Director or Asst. Regional Director-Operations Duration: Not mentioned	Approving Authority: DSWD Field Office Regional Director or Asst. Regional Director-Operations Duration: 2 days

Modalities	Self-Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran (SEA-K)	Capital Seed Fund Skills Training Fund Cash for Building Livelihood Assistance (CBLA)	Seed Capital Fund Skills Training Fund Cash for Building Livelihood Assistance (CBLA) Personal Employment Assistance Fund (PEAF)	Skills Training Fund Seed Capital Fund Cash for Building Livelihood Assistance (CBLA) Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)
Funding per participant	SEA-K = P10,000	CSF= P10,000 Skills Training = P20,000 CBLA = 75% of minimum wage	CSF= P10,000 Skills Training = P20,000 CBLA = 75% of regional minimum wage PEAFF = P5,000	CSF= P15,000 Skills Training = P15,000 CBLA = 75% of regional minimum wage PEAFF = P5,000
Stages of Implementation	1)Social Preparation 2)Capacity Building 3) Accessing and Provision of other support services 4)Monitoring and Evaluation. Note: capacity building is only for MD track	1)Pre-implementation Stage 2)Social Preparation 3)Capacity-building 4)Resource Mobilization 5)Project Implementation, Monitoring and Sustainability	1)Area Identification; 2) Participant Identification; 3) Project Identification; 4) Project Review and Approval; 5) Project Implementation; and 6) Monitoring and Evaluation	1) Social Preparation; 2) Project Development; 3) Project Proposal Review and Approval; 4) Project Operationalization; and 5) Project Sustainability
Community Validation and Consultation	After coming up with a potential list of program participants using databases from different DSWD offices, the list is validated by the PDO with the help of the LGU social worker and members of the C/MAT, in coordination with key informants in the community such as the barangay officials, day care	Same as 2011	The C/MAT first meets and orients the key stakeholders (e.g. Pantawid Pamilya Parent Leaders, local officials, barangay health workers, etc.) and come up with a Community Core Group (CCG), which will also be co-implementers throughout the project, that will help them in coming up with the final list	Community Integration: The IPDO conducts: (1) a coordination meeting with the Barangay LGU and other community leaders; (2) household data vetting where the PDO verifies the information in the household profiles and conducts interviews with the potential SLP participants (using the Household Profiling Questionnaire); part of this is residing in the community for two to four weeks to understand their context, and gain their

	workers, barangay health workers, etc.		of projects and participants.	trust and respect; and (3) conducts the Barangay Assembly.
Formation of the SLP Association (SLPA)	Only for Microenterprise Development Track participants	Only for Microenterprise Development Track participants	Only for Microenterprise Development Track participants.	The potential SLP participants (both MD and EF tracks) are to group themselves and form SLPA's.
Track Selection	The PDOs assess individual profile based on age, education, skill and participants are made to choose their track after orientation PDOs may fit the participant to a track based their assessment of opportunities (market or jobs) in the locality	Same as 2011	The CCG identifies members of the Pantawid families who fit the target participant profiles set for a proposed project concept. The PDOs then get their confirmation and willingness to participate in that project before including them in the final list of participants.	The track selection would be made after basic MD Training. In the basic MD Training participants are apprised about enterprise development and financial management.
Monitoring	There is no PDO solely assigned to the monitoring of the participants	There is no PDO solely assigned to the monitoring of the participants	There is no PDO solely assigned to the monitoring of the participants.	Engage the services of a Field Monitoring PDO (MPDO) to monitor outputs and outcomes of SLP. The implementing PDO (IPDO) is mainly in charge of the targeting and provision of program support.

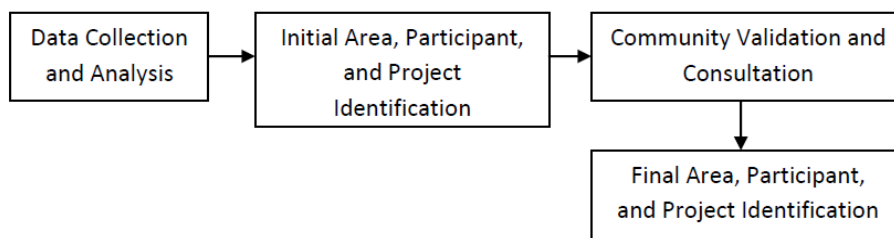
Indicators of Immediate Outcome	- SLP participants served - Pantawid and Non-Pantawid households served	- SLP participants served - Pantawid and Non-Pantawid households served	-SLP participants accessed livelihood assets (physical, financial, human, social, natural) - SLP participants accessed asset protection services	- SLP participants are employed, - Physical and natural assets protected/rehabilitated, rebuilt - Microenterprises are established/enhanced/diversified - SLPAs formed
Indicators of Intermediate Outcome	-Fund recovery/Repayment performance - SLP participants engaged in jobs	-Fund Recovery/Repayment performance - SLP participants engaged in jobs	SLP participants engaged in livelihood and/or jobs	- SLP participants are gainfully employed - Self-governing SLPAs established - SLP participants gained profit from microenterprise
Indicators of End-of-Program Outcome	SLP participants that moved out of poverty and are assess self-sufficient (using SWDI)	SLP participants that moved out of poverty and are assessed self-sufficient (using SWDI)	SLP participants engaged in quality livelihood and/or jobs	SLP participants increased incomes

Source. Author's compilation from DSWD FOM 2013; MC2014; FOM 2015 and proposed FOM 2017.

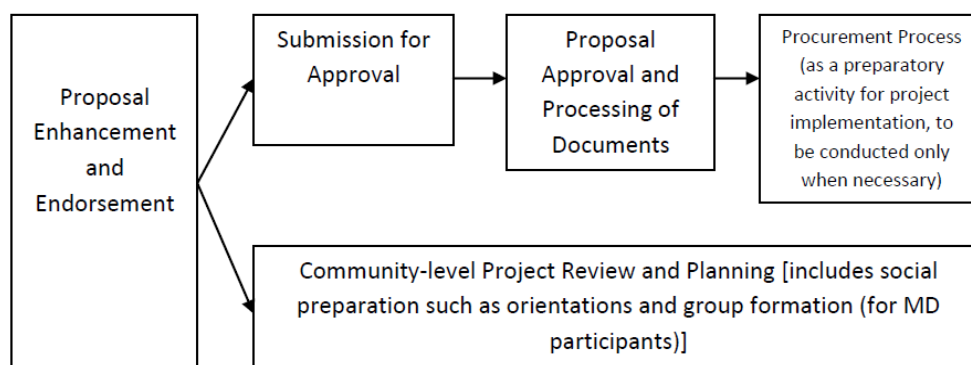
Note: SLP FOM 2017 is yet to be approved but some policies/ processes have been adopted through DSWD Administrative Circulars/Memoranda. In particular, changes in Monitoring and Evaluation are in place and currently implemented. Also, conducting an MD training prior to track selection is already being implemented in NCR.

Figure 2: Flowchart of SLP Process

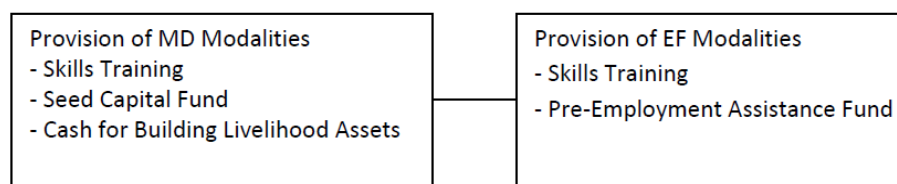
Area, Participant, and Project Identification
(PDO, with the help of City/Municipal Link, and Area Coordinator)



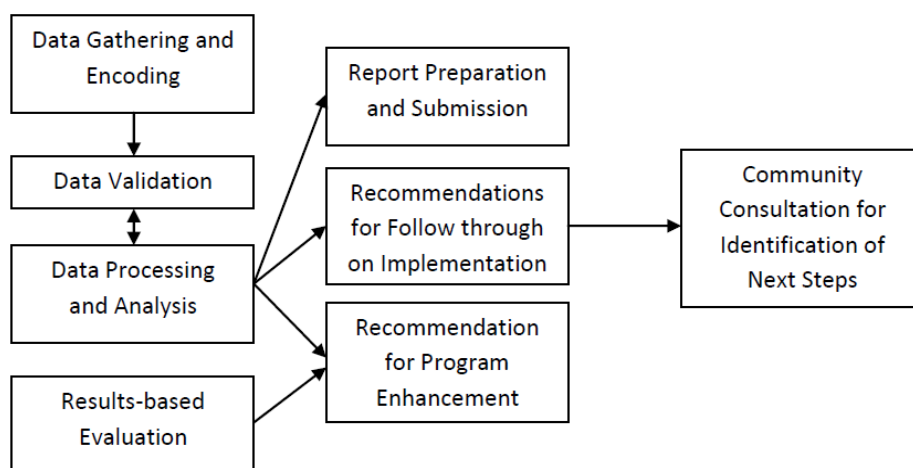
Project Review and Approval
(PDO, CCG, Local Partners, Provincial Coordinator, FO-based RPMO)



Project Implementation
(PDO)



Monitoring and Evaluation
(PDO, PC, M&E Officers for Operations and Finance, National Program Management Office (NPMO))



Source: Authors' summary of information and flowcharts from the DSWD's 2015 SLP FOM

Table 2. Opportunity Identification Matrix

		Labor	Product	Service
Market	Opportunities	<p>Labor market opportunities from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PESO, Local DOLE office, Phil-JobNet - Local business - LGU 	<p>Product market opportunities from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local DTI office - Local DOLE office - Local business registry - LGU 	<p>Service market opportunities from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local DTI office - Local DOLE office - Local business registry - LGU
		<p>Internal DSWD labor market opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction workers for KC-NCDDP sub-projects - Other skilled and unskilled labor requirements for KC-NCDDP sub-projects - Other administrative/clerical staff positions in the Field Office, Provincial Office, C/MSWDO, etc 	<p>Internal DSWD product market opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of supplies/materials (e.g. hollow blocks, wood, other construction materials) for KC-NCDDP sub-projects - Provision of food items for the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) - Provision of other food and non-food products needed in the Field Office, Provincial Office, C/MSWDO, etc. 	<p>Internal DSWD service market opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food catering for KC-NCDDP sub projects - Food catering for DSWD activities (e.g. training, conferences, assemblies) - Other service needs in the Field Office, Provincial Office, C/MSWDO, etc.
	Human Capital	<p>Basic profiles of Pantawid Pamilya families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Educational attainment - Work experience (wage or self-employment) - Products (including food and non-food, raw, semi-processed, and finished goods) - Services (e.g. maintenance, construction, carpentry, repair, food service, laundry, housekeeping, cosmetology, sewing) 	<p>Basic profiles of Pantawid Pamilya families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Educational attainment - Work experience (wage or self-employment) - Products (including food and non-food, raw, semi-processed, and finished goods) - Services (e.g. maintenance, construction, carpentry, repair, food service, laundry, housekeeping, cosmetology, sewing) 	<p>Basic profiles of Pantawid Pamilya families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Educational attainment - Work experience (wage or self-employment) - Products (including food and non-food, raw, semi-processed, and finished goods) - Services (e.g. maintenance, construction, carpentry, repair, food service, laundry, housekeeping, cosmetology, sewing)

Resources	Social Capital	Public and private partners who can provide: - Employment opportunities - Employment opportunities through on-the-job-training (OJT) or dual training system (DTS) arrangements - Skills training for acquisition/enhancement of employable skills - Linkage to employment opportunities, Tax Identification Number (TIN), SSS membership, PhilHealth membership, NBI or police clearance, copy of birth certificate, medical cert - Facilitation of acquisition or preparation of documents required for job application (e.g. cert	Public and private partners who can provide: - Market opportunities (partners as buyers) - Skills training for acquisition/enhancement of skills - Facilitation or linkage to market opportunities - Facilitation of acquisition or preparation of documents to support the enterprise (e.g. business plan, business registration, Tax Identification Number (TIN) for the business, FDA clearance, marketing materials)	Public and private partners who can provide: - Market opportunities (partners as buyers) - Skills training for acquisition/enhancement of skills - Facilitation or linkage to market opportunities - Facilitation of acquisition or preparation of documents to support the enterprise (e.g. business plan, business registration, Tax Identification Number (TIN) for the business, FDA clearance, marketing materials)
	Natural Capital	(not applicable)	- Land (size, uses) - Crops -Other natural sources	- Land (size, uses) - Crops -Other natural sources
	Physical Capital	- Supplies, materials on systems - Equipment, facilities - Road networks, transportation systems - Communication infrastructure (broadcasting and telecommunication services)	- Supplies, materials on systems - Equipment, facilities - Road networks, transportation systems - Communication infrastructure (broadcasting and telecommunication services)	- Supplies, materials on systems - Equipment, facilities - Road networks, transportation systems - Communication infrastructure (broadcasting and telecommunication services)
	Financial Capital	- External sources of funds (e.g. LGU/partner counterparts) - Internal sources of funds (e.g. SLP funds for ST, PEA, CBLA, and BUB)	- External sources of funds (e.g. LGU/partner counterparts) - Internal sources of funds (e.g. SLP funds for ST, PEA, CBLA, and BUB)	- External sources of funds (e.g. LGU/partner counterparts) - Internal sources of funds (e.g. SLP funds for ST, PEA, CBLA, and BUB)

Source of Table: DSWD's 2015 SLP FOM

Table 3. Barangay Ranking Matrix

		Barangays			
		A	B	C	D
General Information	Number of Pantawid Pamilya families				
	Number of self-sufficient families				
	Number of subsistence families				
Priority Opportunities for the City/Municipality					
Project Concept 1	Interventions and modalities to be implemented	A1	B1	C1	D1
Project Concept 2	Interventions and modalities to be implemented	A2	B2	C2	D2
Project Concept 3	Interventions and modalities to be implemented	A3	B3	C3	D3
Project Concept 4	Interventions and modalities to be implemented	A4	B4	C4	D4
Total indicative number of participants for priority projects					
Total indicative number of participants for other projects					
Rank					

Source of Table: DSWD's 2015 SLP FOM

3. Methodology

To gain understanding of the various dimensions of program implementation and their attendant issues, we sought to engage different types of actors involved in SLP as respondents. We engaged seven groups of respondents: SLP Implementing Project Development Officers (IPDOs), SLP Employment Facilitation (EF) beneficiaries, SLP Microenterprise (MD) beneficiaries, training institutes, partner private employers, National Government Agency or Local Government Unit employers, and Public Employment Service Office (PESO) officers. Our respondents fall under three main categories: SLP field implementers, SLP beneficiaries, and SLP partners. Each offer unique perspectives on SLP from the distinct positions they occupy in the SLP project cycle. We carried out focus groups with IPDOs, EF beneficiaries and MD beneficiaries, and KIIs with SLP partners.

To capture variations in SLP implementation across different geographic and economic contexts, we set out to collect data in four main area clusters: the islands groups of Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and the National Capital Region (NCR). We consider NCR as a separate cluster to represent highly urbanized areas. In the three island groups, we selected the provinces of Pangasinan, Cebu, and Davao del Sur. In NCR and the three provinces mentioned, we selected a pair of city/municipal local government units (LGUs). Except in NCR, the two LGUs are to consist of a rural LGU and an urban LGU. Drawing on the Philippine Statistics Authority's classification of barangays as urban or rural, we define an LGU to be urban (rural) if (1) more than half of its population resides in urban (rural) barangays, and (2) more than half of its constituent barangays are urban (rural). The LGUs we selected were Dagupan City and Malasiqui in Pangasinan, Cebu City and Cordova in Cebu, Davao City and Matanao in Davao del Sur, and Caloocan and Manila in NCR. We chose the rural LGUs for their relatively close proximity to the urban LGUs which were to serve as the fieldwork team's base.

The team planned to conduct a total of 20 focus groups and 32 interviews. These consist of one FGD with IPDOs per province (NCR included), and one KII or FGD with each of the six other groups of respondents in each of the eight city/municipal LGUs. Participants to the FGDs with IPDOs are selected at the level of the province (or region, in NCR's case), while participants to the other FGDs and KIIs are selected at the city/municipal level. The number of FGD participants we requested SLP to recruit for our FGDs is seven (7), which we thought gives a good balance between participant diversity and group manageability. We requested that participating IPDOs each come from a different LGU in the province. Similarly, we requested that SLP beneficiaries come from different barangays and, for MD beneficiaries, different SLP associations.

SLP's National Program Management Office provided assistance in linking the team up with the SLP Field Offices of Regions I, VII, XI, and NCR. The field offices mobilized regional-, provincial-, and/or municipal/city-level SLP staff to recruit respondents for our FGDs and identify potential respondents for our KIIs. Field SLP also arranged the venue of the FGDs, most of which were done in the local DSWD office. We arranged the interview appointments with KII respondents ourselves after being provided by SLP with their contact information. Most KII respondents were visited in their offices, although some came to venues prearranged by DSWD.

Fieldwork was carried out from November 6, 2017 to November 29, 2017. The team visited the four clusters in succession, spending two to four days at each one. At the beginning of each FGD and KII, informed-consent procedures were explained and consent forms were distributed for participants to read and sign. All interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the participants. The facilitators used a discussion/interview guide in every interview.

The absence or unavailability of respondents led to deviations in the actual number and location of the interview activities we conducted. For instance, there were no interviews with training and employment partners in any of our chosen rural LGUs as all of those identified by SLP are located in an urban LGU. Interviews with employers were the hardest to secure. In cases wherein the SLP office did not identify an employer, the identified employer was unavailable at the time of the fieldwork, or the employer's office was too far from the team's base to make pursuing the interview impractical, no interview with an employer was conducted. In addition, the team exercised flexibility in pursuing FGDs and KIIs outside of the LGUs we identified in situations wherein the SLP field office managed to arrange an FGD of SLP beneficiaries from a different LGU, or if the identified key informant holds office in a different LGU.

The team conducted a total 20 FGDs and 17 KIIs. Table 4 tabulates the activities we accomplished in each of the four area clusters. Table 5 lists the LGUs we visited during the fieldwork under each cluster.

Table 4. Focus groups and interviews conducted per cluster

Type of interview	Luzon (Pangasinan)	Visayas (Cebu)	Mindanao (Davao del Sur)	NCR	Total
FGD with IPDOs	1	1	1	1	4
FGD with EF beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	8
FGD with MD beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	8
KII with Training Institute	2	2	2	2	8
KII with PESO	1	2	1	1	5
KII with Private Employer	0	0	0	2	2
KII with NGA/LGU Employer	1	0	1	0	2
Total	9	9	9	10	37

Table 5. Fieldwork sites

	Luzon (Pangasinan)	Visayas (Cebu)	Mindanao (Davao del Sur)	NCR
Urban	Dagupan City Lingayen	Cebu City Danao City Mandaue City	Davao City Digos City	Caloocan City Manila Pasig City
Rural	Malasiqui	Consolacion	Matanao	NA

4. SLP Program Development Officers (PDOs) Service Delivery

The team conducted four FGDs with the Implementing Program Development Officers (IPDOs). The FGDs were held in Dagupan City, Cebu City, Davao City, and Manila. The participants in each FGDs were IPDOs assigned in different city/municipal LGUs of Pangasinan, Cebu, Davao del Norte, and NCR, respectively. A total of 28 IPDOs participated in the FGDs; 18 of them are female and 10 are male. Each FGD had seven participants. The respondents were in the range of 20-45 years old.

The FGDs with IPDOs were undertaken to understand how the SLP processes are operationalized especially those that pertain to beneficiary targeting and service delivery. We also wanted to know the program's successes, opportunities and challenges as experienced in the field. Below is a summary of the discussions based on three main themes: (1) area and beneficiary selection; (2) operational essentials; and (3) opportunities and challenges.

4.1. Area and beneficiary selection

Area and participant identification is the first stage of the SLP project cycle. Targets in terms of numbers are set by the Central Office and cascaded to the different regions and then to the provinces. The targets also include the ratio for MD and EF. For instance, in 2016 a ratio of 45% MD and 55% EF was set by the Central Office. However, accomplishments as of November 2016 show 65% MD and 35% EF. In 2017, the Central Office set the ratio at 20% EF and 80% MD. The ratio by municipality may differ. For instance, in the city the Provincial PDO may give the PDO a target of 40% EF and 60% MD. In NCR, a highly urbanized area, the target ratio given by the Central Office was 81% EF 19% MD. The DSWD has recognized that a one-size-fits-all policy is not applicable because of different opportunities in target areas. Thus, there are areas where MD outputs are higher than EF or vice versa.

The Provincial Coordinators allocate the targets for both MD and EF to cities and municipalities depending on the opportunities available in the provinces. The provincial coordinators have the flexibility to reallocate within the year to meet target accomplishments. The targets within municipalities/cities are equally divided among the PDOs assigned in the area. The PDOs then identifies the specific barangays and/or individuals to benefit from the program.

Based on the operations manual, the identification of individuals starts through the Municipal or City Link and convergence with the Pantawid staff. Since the primary target beneficiaries of the SLP program are the family members of Pantawid beneficiaries, the Pantawid database is the main source of information for the IPDOs. Through this convergence, the IPDOs come up with a list of potential beneficiaries. However, in several cases those in the list refuse to participate in SLP. A common reason mentioned is that they have other things to do or that the identified individual has to look after the children and may not be able to devote time for trainings and/or meetings.

However, it may also happen that the Municipal/City Link will not make any endorsement, so the alternative option for the IPDOs is to introduce SLP during the monthly Family Development

Sessions (FDS) of Pantawid beneficiaries and ask among those present to register their names or the names of other household members, relatives, or friends who are likely to participate in SLP. The list thus consists of individuals willing to participate and those volunteered by their family/relative/friend to participate. The IPDOs draw up their list from those who registered during the FDS. This alternative option is apparently adopted by IPDOs in several areas. The reason is that SLP is viewed as a need-based program and the need for supplementary support has to be expressed by the Pantawid households themselves.

4.2. Operational details of SLP

The IPDOs refer to the Municipal/City Links' databases that provide the basic information on age, education, skill and/or need, and Social Welfare Development Indicators³ (SWDI) data. The SWDI classifies Pantawid families to be in one of three levels of well-being: survival, subsistence, and self-sufficiency. IPDOs target those under the subsistence level of well-being, as families in the survival level are too preoccupied with survival-level issues to be able to meaningfully engage in livelihood activities. However, they may consider survival-level families when individuals in the targeted families are few or refuse to participate.

Aside from the database/information from Pantawid, the IPDOs conduct participatory assessment or a consultation process with the participants. The IPDOs ask them to write down their wishes (e.g. "*wish ko lang* list") that includes the type of employment or microenterprise activity they want to engage in as well as the trainings and other interventions they need for their livelihood. The IPDOs discourage similar enterprises in the same neighborhood to avoid market competition unless the beneficiaries agree to have a group enterprise. From the above profiling, the IPDOs determine what SLP intervention is appropriate. They also draw up project proposals from the results of the participatory process and their assessment of available opportunities in the area, e.g. resources, market, financial capacity of households, employment.

The identified beneficiaries will then be oriented about MD or EF. The sorting of participant track is usually based on the individual's choice but IPDOs assessment of the locality or the participants profile are also considered. For instance, in agriculture-based communities, the MD track may be considered by the IPDO as the appropriate intervention due to lack of business establishments in the area, and thus be the only track offered to the participants. Participants in the area may also prefer MD to EF because the available employment opportunities are outside the municipality or province. This can be a constraint not only in terms of being away from the family but also in terms of the viability of the employment. For instance, in Region I, the minimum regional wage is only P280/day (8 hours). This wage just supports the basic need (transport cost, housing, food). Another consideration in track selection is the participants' age. EF is usually for the younger

³ The SWDI is a summary measure of well-being of Pantawid families defined by two dimensions: economic sufficiency and social adequacy. A family's SWDI index is derived from a weighted aggregation of its scores on a set of 23 economic and social indicators (e.g. income, employment, health and education). Based on its score, a family is classified as being under survival (level 1), subsistence (Level 2), or self-sufficiency (level 3). SWDI assessments were envisioned to be conducted annually, although none have been undertaken since the baseline assessment in 2014. See DSWD (n.d), "The Social Welfare and Development Indicators Manual."

members of the household. Given these considerations, the IPDOs may introduce only the MD track or the EF track to participants. However, in highly urbanized areas such as NCR, participants usually are given orientation on both MD and EF.

The preferences of participants for MD or EF tend to vary across regions. This could be affected by the locality and beneficiary characteristics. In NCR, which is a highly urbanized area, the IPDOs noted higher preference for MD. This was attributed to two factors: one, cash is given at the onset as capital for livelihood; and two, the cash capital is considered as a revolving fund for the association, which can be a source of financing even after their children or the household is no longer a beneficiary of Pantawid.

The social preparation starts once the participants are complete based on minimum requirement of a total participants of at least 25 for both MD and EF. The preparatory phase takes about three days. Some participants may already drop out during this period. Those who drop out usually do not want to go through the preparatory process.

Specifically, for the EF track, DSWD has partnership with PESO in the provinces or municipalities but this partnership is at different levels in each area. The partnership maybe formalized or not. The usual arrangement is for the IPDOs to informally coordinate with the PESO manager in job fairs or refer beneficiaries to PESO based on the skills needed by employers that are registered under PESO. The job fairs are not exclusive to SLP beneficiaries. They invite applicants/candidates from the region depending on the skills needed by the participating employers. It is possible though to make arrangements with PESO to have an exclusive job fair for Pantawid or SLP beneficiaries but this should first be studied or piloted.

In some areas, graduation of SLPs are done in PESO offices. PESO may also directly inform IPDOs of new job opportunities in the province. There are SLP beneficiaries who have been employed through the PESO. Some have stayed in the job; other especially those who had to work away from their families usually do not stay long in their jobs. Some IPDOs also coordinate with PESO in monitoring the beneficiaries in the short-term. For instance, they are informed by PESO of cases when beneficiaries leave the job without proper discharge from the employer.

Employers do not necessarily accept referrals from PESO or from SLP; applicants are still evaluated individually but the process of screening is shorter since profiling has been initially undertaken. Also, skills training has already been provided so in most cases SLP beneficiaries referred by DSWD are offered jobs especially for jobs such as housekeeping.

Aside from PESO, IPDOs also coordinate directly with private employers for job opportunities of SLP beneficiaries. They get job announcements through postings in social media, buildings, newspapers, etc. There are also cases when private employers approach them for applicants. The IPDOs inform the beneficiaries and the Parent Leaders if there are ready employment opportunities and they are legal or authentic. In these cases, there is no need for a MOA between DSWD and the company. While direct coordination with private employers is still being done by some

IPDOs, other IPDOs are doing less of it because it is time consuming (unless the employer themselves approach them).

Most IPDOs prefer to partner with training institutes and schools that have tie-up with employers. These agencies have partner hotels, hospitals, restaurants, etc. where they send their trainees after graduation. Some even have MOAs with specific companies/agencies, thus the chances of getting employed in the case of training with employment tie-up are high. The training institute provides the skills training which is funded through SLP. Under this modality, a MOA is required between the training institute and DSWD. The MOA requires the training institute to ensure the employment of at least 85% of SLP graduates. The selection of the training institute has to go through a procurement basis with their contracts renewed every three years. In the past, training institutes were simply identified or endorsed by the Municipal/City Link.

Another constraint in partnership with training institutes is the requirement on the number of participants before the start of the training activity. Some training institutes have a minimum requirement of 25 participants per training before they start the process and usually when some beneficiaries drop out during the training period they have to be replaced. Payment for the trainings are done at the end and DSWD pays only for those participants who completed the training. This ensures that the training institutes also do their part of encouraging the beneficiaries to complete their training.

For partnership with the NGA/LGU, DSWD partners primarily with the DPWH through the DPWH *Trabahong Lansangan* Program. However, the MOU between DPWH and DSWD ended in 2016 and has not been renewed since. DPWH still hires Pantawid without MOU with DSWD but through its job order budgets. DPWH prefer longer term arrangement for those beneficiaries employed by them because they have already been trained for the job. On the other hand, DSWD has this practice of job rotation every six months so that other SLP beneficiaries can be given employment.

4.3. Opportunities and constraints in SLP implementation

A major issue mentioned by most IPDOs is the long time for project review and approval for both EF and MD. In the case of EF, the delays affect the release of PEAf. Beneficiaries need the pre-employment assistance to secure the required employment requirements such as NBI clearance, medical clearance, BIR tax ID number, HDMF, etc. However, it may take two to three months for the approval of the PEAf, which is a long time to wait. The beneficiaries cannot afford to stay unemployed for a long time so they often end up backing out. This leads to losses in EF outputs.

For MD, the review and approval process has been affected by the manner in which the DSWD Central Office implement policy changes and the recent policy on the accreditation of SLP associations. During the review process, additional requirements may be requested by the Central Office and until the additional requirements are given, the process is on hold. The DSWD Central Office has also this practice of changing policies mid-way; they just send the new memorandum to the regions and provinces and the changes have to be immediately complied with (usually a day

after the memo was received). Sometimes even approved projects or projects that are already under review are affected. This procedure affects timeline, manpower and project viability since IPDOs may need to redo the process.

There is also too much emphasis on list of beneficiaries in the project review and approval. The approval is based on the individuals on the list instead of projects so that in case one of the participants back out, the IPDOs have to go through a replacement process that requires going back to the individuals on the list to get a waiver before they consider other beneficiaries.

On the accreditation policy, the SLP associations have to get CSO accreditation before they can be considered legal entities. In previous years, the DSWD certification is sufficient but due to the proliferation of “bogus” associations receiving funds from government programs, the DBM has required this policy for DSWD projects as well to ensure that the recipient of funds are legitimate associations. The approval time for MD can be long (short of 2 months; maximum of one year) which discourages the participants and is strenuous to IPDOs.

Another constraint is the delay in project implementation due to the recent policy on bidding. Unlike in the past whereby training institutes are simply identified by the Municipal Link, the new policy requires that the selection go through the government procurement process. This takes about three months. There are also cases when training institutes are discouraged to participate because of the bidding requirements. There was even a case in NCR wherein only one or none at all joined the bidding due to the tedious process and requirements. This policy causes further delay in project starts and leads to drop-outs for EF participants and also MD participants that go through livelihood training before engaging in microenterprise activity.

The PEA amount is also considered low because the EF beneficiaries don't get their paycheck immediately and thus would need support for transport and food when they start on their jobs. Moreover, specific jobs require more clearances for employment. For instance, security agencies require security guards to have “special” tests such as neuro, drug test, complete medical assessment, etc.

Another constraint is the recent focus on social preparation (which is also included in the proposed 2017 FOM). Most IPDOs are not trained in community organizing. There are very few of them with training in social preparation. For instance, out of twenty PDOs hired only one or two pass community organizing test. There is also no orientation. Once hired, they are immediately sent to the field. It's practically an on-the-job training. Also, in depth social preparation is not aligned with the timeline of funds disbursement.

The case loads of IPDOs was also a concern raised. One PDO can be assigned to as many as 86 barangays. It is not possible to visit each Pantawid household in every barangay. In addition to the SLP implementation, they also write reports, construct the database, submit accomplishments, etc. Due to lack of manpower, they cannot fully mentor the beneficiaries. They rely on Parent Leaders to communicate information about programs to member households. However, Parent Leaders can also be politicized, prioritizing relatives, friends or their own households over other

eligible households. The creation of the monitoring PDOs will not necessarily reduce workload. The monitoring team is mainly concerned with those already served in the past by the program; whether the project has been implemented, how it was implemented and what additional support is needed. Only after 6 months can the IPDOs turn over the beneficiaries served to the monitoring team. In case there are problems, the IPDOs are tasked to troubleshoot.

Aside from operational challenges, there is also the concern on the behavior of beneficiaries themselves. For EF beneficiaries, some who got employed go back to old bad habits (e.g. drugs) when they get their salaries. They also lack motivation. Some beneficiaries also do not go to job fairs. Sometimes, they are very choosy on job locations or type of employers and salary (even if paid the minimum regional wage). There are also several concerns regarding beneficiaries not pushing through with employment after they have received the pre-employment assistance (PEAF).

For MD participants, the formation of SLP Association can be an issue. Although they were given orientation on this requirement, some withdraw their memberships in the implementation stage. They also collude to just divide the seed fund, use the funds for their own enterprises or needs and dissolve or render the association inactive. Rifts and factions among members also happen and the SLP association often breaks down.

Despite the problems on program implementation, the IPDOs noted some successes. For EF beneficiaries, some have been gainfully employed, that is, receiving the regional minimum wage. Some beneficiaries were able to get regular work tenure or got promoted. For MD beneficiaries, the SLP association is surviving and has been able to mobilize savings among members. The members are able to support or expand their businesses and are able to invest in household assets.

The processes/activities of SLP that needs improvements are the following. First, project review and approval have to be strengthened. The DSWD Central Office should continue to process the proposed projects while additional requirements are being worked out. The approval process for EF and MD should be tied to the project rather than the specific individuals. Also, the DSWD Central Office should first pilot any policy change before cascading to provinces. Second, the monitoring team should not only focus on database development but undertake mentoring and continuous technical assistance to served beneficiaries. Third, lessen the social preparation of EF but focus on what jobs they need, trainings and immediate project approval. They have to be empowered and use successful beneficiaries of EF to encourage other Pantawid members. The benefits gained from EF or MD have to be marketed/advertised more effectively. Fourth, the proposed shift from pre-employment assistance package to employment assistance under the FOM 2017 should be supported. This means the assistance is given when the beneficiary is already employed. The strategy addresses the concern of beneficiaries not pushing through with their employment after receiving the PEAF. Fifth, discontinue the practice of providing starter kits in skills training. Instead starter kits should be provided as part of seed capital fund of MD beneficiaries. This will address the issue of beneficiaries having starter kits that do not match the microenterprise projects that are eventually developed by them.

5. Beneficiary Assessment of Tracks and Program

The team conducted a total of eight FGDs each for MD and EF beneficiaries. The FGDs were held in Dagupan and Malasiqui in Pangasinan, Mandaue City and Consolacion in Cebu, Davao City and Matanao in Davao del Sur, and in Manila and Caloocan City in NCR. For EF, Danao City was chosen as the FGD site in place of Mandaue City. A snapshot of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the FGD sites shows that urban sites tend to have lower poverty incidence, have a larger number of establishments, and are less dependent on fiscal transfers (in the form of the Internal Revenue Allotment) compared to the rural sites. The exception is Danao City, whose indicators are more in line with those of rural LGUs than its urban peers (i.e. relatively high poverty incidence, high IRA dependence, and low number of establishments). Consolacion, Cebu is not rural, but the FGD held in the municipality was attended by respondents from rural LGUs, namely Cordova and Dumanjug, Cebu.

A total of 49 MD beneficiaries participated in the FGDs – 43 of them are female and 6 are male. Each FGD had six participants on average. Most of the respondents were wives and mothers. Many of them are officers in their respective SLP Associations (e.g. president or treasurer) or Parent Leaders of the Pantawid program. On the other hand, for EF, a total of 39 beneficiaries participated – 21 of them are male and 18 are female. Each FGD had five participants on average. There are usually fewer participants in EF FGDs than MD because the beneficiaries are at work.

The FGDs with SLP MD and EF beneficiaries were undertaken to know in detail their experience with SLP specifically their decision to participate in the program, the choice of track, their assessment of the benefits of participating in SLP and their suggestions on how to improve the implementation of the program. The results of the discussions are presented below.

5.1. Decision to join SLP and track selection

Those who join EF track can be categorized into three types: those economically active (or with existing jobs or enterprises); those actively looking for opportunities for employment; and those staying home and not contributing to household income. They are usually the younger members of Pantawid household or a relative or friend of Pantawid beneficiary. Some were not informed of the MD track; others were not really interested in business because they want a stable income and they are not exposed to it; others are after the skills training and/or experience so they can work abroad. The main consideration for joining was the free skills training and the possibility of having a job.

The beneficiaries of MD track can also be classified into three types: those already engaged in business and are looking for opportunities to expand business; those who had businesses in the past; and those with no business experience at all and are usually stay-at-home mothers. They learned about the SLP program because they are Pantawid beneficiaries or previous beneficiaries (i.e. their children have graduated) or they were informed by their relatives or friends. The reasons for choosing the MD are: (1) they have experience in handling business; (2) they are beyond 40 years old and prefer to leave employment to their kids; and (3) they are stay-at-home moms and

have to take care of the kids or home because husband is working; and (4) they prefer to be their own boss so they do not have to take orders from anyone.

5.2. Assistance provided by SLP

All MD beneficiaries were provided microenterprise development training. Majority considered this training useful especially seminars on how to grow the business, time management, recording and how to market products. A few mentioned that they are familiar with business so the basic microenterprise are not really necessary. A one-day orientation would be sufficient. Establishing SLP Association was also mentioned but was not considered that helpful for enterprise development. The respondents generally prefer to have individual business so they need not worry about the repayment performance or business failures and other problems of other members.

The SLP intervention that is most relevant are the specialized skills training such as basket weaving, massage, beauty parlor, sewing, food preparations and others. It appears that beneficiaries can receive more than one of these special trainings. A case in point are Parent Leaders who participated in massage and beauty parlor training or in bamboo basket weaving and massage. These Parent Leaders earn incomes from both enterprises.

The specialized trainings are given free of charge and they also receive allowances at the end of the training period. The allowance also gives them the incentive to complete the trainings. From these trainings they are able to establish livelihood. Some do not go through specialized skills training because they have already acquired the skill needed for their enterprise project. Usually these are projects on retail/wholesale trade.

The beneficiaries also look forward to receiving the seed capital fund that provides them the financing for new business or for expansion of business. The maximum amount is P10,000 but the amount varies by type of project. Part of the fund is also used as equity in the SLP Association. For some active associations, they use the equity and savings as credit fund which they can tap for additional financing needs.

For EF, the preparatory activities are primarily orientation about the SLP EF track, and basic management of household finances (e.g. savings mobilization). The orientation usually last for one day. The specialized trainings are the most helpful because it includes values formation, basic job skills (e.g. writing resume and reports, grooming, personality development) and the specific skills for the jobs that they applied for (e.g. security guard, BPO technician). Aside from the free training, they are also given allowance and free transport for participation in the trainings. SLP also assists them in finding jobs and connect them to companies. They also received PEAFF once they have a guaranteed job, although the amount is usually reimbursed due to delays in project approvals. Some were not able to avail of PEAFF because they were not aware of this additional support.

5.3. Non-SLP related factors that affect the beneficiary's business or employment

For employment, the challenges are usually availability of jobs and distance. Some beneficiaries considered requirements especially in big companies and competition with other applicants as

constraints to getting a job. Family issues also matter. One beneficiary narrated that her husband does not consider massage or “hilot” a decent job; thus, she was not able to utilize her training to provide for extra income for the family. Others are constrained by their physical conditions. They have certain illnesses (e.g. asthma) that limit opportunities for work. Attitude towards work is also a factor for lack of success in employment. The person may lack motivation or be unwilling to make sacrifices.

For MD beneficiaries, the factors that helped businesses are location, markets and cooperation of the barangay. The business has to be located in strategic places and have the support of the LGU. For instance, location near school is good for business on school supplies, food vending, printing, and photocopying. It is also important to expand your market. It does not have to be confined to the barangay of municipality. Engaging in wholesale trade is better than retail (“tingi”) trade because buyers of retail trade usually have low paying capacity. There is also a need to build character, people skills and resourcefulness if one has to engage in business.

On the other hand, business can be constrained by several factors. Conflicts within organization is not good for business especially for cooperatives. Poor management and leadership resulted in some businesses closing shop. For individual business, delays in the issuance of business permit is one factor. One beneficiary related that they have been waiting for 11 months but no permit has yet been issued even though they have already complied with all the requirements/documentation. The cost of warehousing or renting space is also high and lack of space can be a constraint for businesses with machines or requiring inventory. Small space also restricts the expansion of business. Seasonality of demand also affected some MD beneficiaries. They had to engage in alternative products to address seasonality. Weather conditions affected small businesses especially those engage in retail trade of agricultural products. Moreover, physical health and old age have also affected the livelihood of beneficiaries engaged in farming.

5.4 Benefits from participating in SLP

Majority of beneficiaries agreed that their standard of living has improved with the SLP intervention. For those in employment, most were satisfied; only a few (in the Visayas region) mentioned that the benefits of SLP were not evident yet. Those who were satisfied indicated that SLP provided them with stable income and their exposure to big companies (e.g. provincial hospital, international companies) through SLP has opened opportunities for regular employment. It also boosted their confidence as they gained more skills and experience. One beneficiary related that although he left the company where he was employed under SLP, the employment has given him the motivation to pursue further studies. SLP has connected them to job networks and enabled them to expand job opportunities. It also opened opportunities for higher paying jobs and access to foreign companies. They were able to buy household appliances and are now doing something worthwhile. Some also mentioned that they are now able to give back something to their parents and contribute in paying for household expenses.

For MD beneficiaries, the response with regard to the benefits from SLP was also positive. SLP has moved them from survival to food self-sufficiency. They have money to buy the food they want and household appliances. Some have been able to expand their businesses and ventured into other businesses. Some beneficiaries were able to send their children to college because of

improvement in their income. Non-monetary benefits were also mentioned such as improved status in the community and leadership experience especially among Parent Leaders. They also learned the importance of community service and giving back to the community by helping those less fortunate. The children in Pantawid households have also learned the value of work, studies and prudence.

To improve SLP, both EF and MD beneficiaries recommended to expand training opportunities. Some suggested to hold the trainings at the barangay level so that interested Pantawid beneficiaries who cannot travel far from their residence can also participate in SLP. Others suggested to increase offerings of training programs. For instance, in some areas there was a suggestion to include hairdressing while for other areas the demand for massage training is high. These activities are already being offered by DSWD but the types of training offered per locality is dependent on resources and the demand for specific training. Some wanted to be able to take further training courses to upgrade the skills they learned and obtain certification (e.g. NC II or III). There was also a suggestion to provide employment opportunities for older people especially those who are unable to engage in business.

6. Partnership with Training Institutions

The team conducted KIIs with eight training institutes, mostly private institutions. For public training institution, DSWD partners with the TESDA, which also accredits the private institutions. The KIIs were conducted in Cebu City, Mandaue City, Digos City, Davao City, Dagupan City, Manila and Caloocan City. All of the areas visited were cities. The concerned SLP field offices were not able to identify partner training schools located in the rural LGUs we requested. All respondents were interviewed in the training school except for the two Pangasinan training schools, who sent their representatives to a venue in Dagupan arranged by the SLP field office.

There were 7 training institutes that participated in the interviews and the respondents were either administrators or managers at their respective training schools. The discussion focused on the training services offered by the institutes; how they find their trainees and their experience in training SLP beneficiaries. The results of the discussions are presented below.

6.1. Company's background

All the training institutes interviewed have the appropriate accreditation for the courses they offer. Most institutes offer technical vocational courses and are accredited by the TESDA. Some Institutes especially those that offer degree programs are also accredited by the Commission for Higher Education (CHED) They offer several courses as much as 30 technical vocational courses that are conducted either on campus or through mobile training. Others offer technical vocational courses with senior high school program (Grades 11 and 12) and are accredited by the Department of Education. There are specialized training institutes focusing on specific skills e.g. security guard, healthcare related skills; call center agents, etc. The training institutes also undertake assessments to provide for the appropriate certification of trainee graduates.

The training institutes support their trainees through on-the-job training and/or employment. This is possible because they have partnership with industries that have needs for the courses that they offer. The partner agencies include hotels, food and beverage companies, big establishments requiring security services, hospitals, massage clinics, BPO companies including those located abroad. Having their trainees employed is good for their business thus they exert efforts to have them employed. Some companies go the extent of helping the applicants in their applications and accompanying them to potential employers. Some training institutes boast of a 100 percent employment rate of their graduates.

6.2. Partnership with SLP

The partnership with SLP started through different channels. Some institutions write to DSWD in the municipality or region for accreditation under the program. Others were approached by DSWD to partner with them for skills training or were referred to DSWD by friends of PDOs or by the municipal/city link. The partnership is usually formalized through a MOA and DSWD requires at least 80% employment for SLP beneficiary-graduates. So far, this arrangement works with the training institute. Their main issue is the procurement process (bidding). Others find the requirements reasonable but others think it is restrictive. The other issue is the long approval process of projects. It delays the start of trainings and in some cases SLP participants drop out because they cannot wait long or were offered other opportunities.

6.3. Assessment of SLP and beneficiaries

The DSWD determines what trainings to give. IPDOs just send to the training institute the batch of SLP beneficiaries for training. The type of training is specified in the MOA and identified in the procurement process. The participants are also pre-identified so the screening is done by the PDOs. However, the training institutes validate the records (age, education) and conduct pre-test and assessment to determine the level of competency of the SLP beneficiaries for a specific training – whether he/she is good for a level 1, 2 or 3 certifications. There are cases when a training institution disqualifies SLP participants because they did not meet the basic requirement for the training specifically if there are already pre-qualification standards set by agencies (e.g. TESDA for Tech Voc; PNP for security guards). Failure to pass the pre-test can also disqualify the trainee.

To prepare them for the training and employment, the trainees go through an orientation period where expectations about the course and requirements are given. Values formation, work ethics, grooming, communications are included in the curriculum. Previous SLP trainees are also invited to give testimonies of their successes. These testimonies can inspire the new trainees to work hard.

All trainings go through post assessment, which are based on national assessment handled by the TESDA. Those who fail can be re-trained (sometimes free of charge) but they will have to go through intensive training wherein assessments are conducted at every stage.

In terms of performance, SLP beneficiaries are trainable. Majority of them finish the training and pass the national certification. The few who are unable to complete training or fail usually have personal problems or have no interest in the training because they were probably just forced by their parents to attend. The SLP participants are generally respectful and prefers to stay close to

home or family. Unlike other graduates, they are not that keen of getting employment abroad. A trait observed among SLP participants is their being more sensitive to correction and on how they are being treated. They can be difficult to please when it comes to food and accommodation perhaps because they know that government is paying for their food and accommodation while on training.

Most graduates also find employment because of the training institutes network. Some remain unemployed because they don't want to work far from their residence or be uprooted from their provinces. Those employed are monitored by the Institute for 3 to 6 months or maximum of one year. There are training institutes that use social media (Facebook, group chats) so that the graduates stay connected with the Institute or DSWD.

7. Partnership with PESO

The team interviewed four (5) PESO officers -- two from Cebu, and one each from Pangasinan, Davao de Sur, and NCR. For the other LGUs, we were either unable to secure an appointment with the PESO office or were not provided by the SLP field office of the local PESO's contact information. The discussion focused on services provided by the PESOs in the locality and in particular to SLP beneficiaries; their assessment of the SLP beneficiaries; and their recommendations to improve the chances of success of employment for SLP beneficiaries. The results of the discussions are presented below.

7.1. General PESO services

PESOs technically are part of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) but administered by the LGUs. Their programs are thus similar to the DOLE job placement assistance and job facilitation. The focus and strategy of PESOs differ per LGU and they also provide additional services. Some give emphasis on job placement activities through special recruitment events for local and/or overseas jobs. Others focus on employment facilitation or a combination of job placement and employment facilitation/coaching. Some PESOs have special programs section which handles additional support such as manpower training and/or scholarship programs; enterprise development, migration facilitation, SPES. Manpower trainings are given free and scholarship programs are targeted to the indigent but deserving students with monetary incentives and paid on-the-job trainings in the LGU after graduation. SPES is the DOLE program for students during summer breaks. The migration facilitation includes anti-illegal recruitment, OFW assistance, coordination to other government agencies, etc.

Most PESOs partner with private employers. The PESO managers actively seek employers to determine their job requirements which they then include in the local PESO database. The managers also invite private firms to post vacancies in PESOs. Usually they invite companies that match their clientele. For instance, if those seeking employment are mostly fitted for blue collar workers, they partner with companies that have similar requirements e.g. supermarkets, malls, construction companies, etc. Some have preference for jobs abroad and they partner with agencies that can provide overseas employment. Employers also call their offices and inform them of the

position and qualifications that they seek. Some PESOs entertain employers that request for a special recruitment. Under special recruitment, the PESO with the authorization or accreditation from DOLE acts like a manpower recruitment service for the specific company. The LGU conducts a special recruitment activity on a specific day and submits a report on the results of the recruitment identifying the applicants who passed the screening; those who did not pass or those who needs training.

Employers do not have to be based in the locality or even province. Most PESOs go beyond the region. They consider the job market as global so information is gathered from different sources- e.g. newspapers, labor sites of other countries. They monitor call centers and growth areas in the provinces/regions and look at future requirements so they can prepare ahead for the skills needed. For instance, if there are plans to develop ports or infrastructure in the province, they coordinate with the LGUs and prospective firms on jobs that are likely to be needed (e.g. welders). It should be the role of the national government to be proactive in the search job opportunities but it is not done, so the PESOs have to be innovative.

The PESOs maintain a database of available jobs and some have also database of applicants. Most PESOs have no online registration yet but they have local portals where they upload jobs available and provide other labor market information. Some have the account from DOLE's job search portal. The portal is updated by calling employers whether the vacancies are still open or the employers themselves inform the PESO of updates. They also have a duration for posting; when the duration ends, they take the post down if the employers do not supply updated information. Applicants may know of the vacancies through online portals in the PESOs; Facebook, advertisements in local newspapers or posted in the barangay or other LGU offices.

In the case of job fairs, PESOs provide the venue and invite employers to participate. Invitations to employers are done directly or through radio, television and social media. PESOs have partnership with the media. Highly urbanized cities conduct several job fairs in a year. For instance, Cebu have 6 job fairs per year; three local and three for overseas employment. In a provincial PESO, job fairs are conducted twice yearly. In the last job fairs, 32 local employers and 10 overseas employers or agencies participated in the job fairs. The Provincial PESOs have broader reach. It is not confined to a specific municipality but extends services to other municipalities in the province. A report is usually prepared by PESOS for every job fair which are submitted to DOLE Regional Office and transmitted to the Central Office.

PESOs also conduct career/employment coaching and employment hunting. There are cases when PESOs bring applicants to job fairs sponsored by other LGUs specifically if this involves deployment overseas.

Some PESOs do monitoring such as keeping records of those hired through the PESOs and the office can act on their concerns about delays in salary, problems in the remittance of SSS, etc. In other PESOs, the monitoring is not formalized but those with concerns (including the employer) can approach the office for assistance or feedback.

7.2. PESO and SLP

PESOs do not have formalized agreements with the SLP. It is usually the PDOs that approach PESO for possible jobs for the SLP beneficiaries or trainees. In some cases, the PESO may not be aware of the SLP but are familiar with the 4Ps beneficiaries since the LGUs are members of the municipal/city link. The usual support of PESOs to SLP beneficiaries is to invite and encourage them to participate in job fairs and other activities of the PESO. In some cases, there is a special lane for SLP/Pantawid beneficiaries during job fairs. SLP beneficiaries availing of PESO services have to be registered with the PESO office. There is really no special activity for SLP/Pantawid beneficiaries since it is possible that there could be a low turnout of applicants if job fairs are only organized for them. The most that the PESO can do is to ensure that they are registered and can have access to labor market information, trainings and microenterprise support. If DSWD or the national government wants to create a special program for them, this should be studied. So far, the PESOs have not been approached by employers or firms that specifically request to hire only 4Ps or SLP beneficiaries.

7.3 Assessment of SLP beneficiaries

Most PESOs think that there is really nothing special or challenging with SLP beneficiaries that is different from non-SLP beneficiaries. The 4Ps have become active because they are given opportunities and are now more exposed. They can be picky maybe for legitimate reasons like the job is far from their homes. For those who were employed, there are feedbacks that the applicant backed out or left the employment but these issues are already beyond the PESOs concern.

Possible areas for intervention is for DSWD to include 4Ps beneficiaries in the job fairs for PWD. Other activities to improve the program is better information dissemination and training on values formation, work ethics, etc. DSWD also needs to adopt policies to improve monitoring of SLP beneficiaries by the PDOs themselves (not only rely on the Parent Leaders). PDOs need to differentiate those actively seeking a job from those who were just volunteered by their family, PDOs or relatives/friends to participate. It is usually those actively seeking for jobs or voluntarily go to PESO that have the fortitude and are serious about employment. There should also be a system of culling out from the 4Ps program those unable to improve their lives. With regard to coordination with DSWD there is no problem. PESO managers attend regular meetings and do validation and feedback.

8. Partnership with Private and Public Employers

The team interviewed three private employers. SLP field officers in the other study areas were unable to identify other private employer partners since in other areas employment facilitation are primarily done through training institutions. There were three private employers that participated in the interviews; two of these firms are labor service providers that are organized as cooperatives.

For public employment, the team interviewed two offices of the DPWH in Luzon and Mindanao. Other SLP field officers were unable to identify an NGA/LGU employment partner.

The key informant interviews (KIIs) with partner employers of SLP, both private and public were undertaken to know how employers select their employees in general, and what their views are on employing SLP beneficiaries in particular. The results of the interview are presented below:

8.1. Company's background

The companies interviewed include two manpower services that have big companies as clients and recruits mainly underprivileged workers. However, unlike the usual manpower services, they ensure that their work force have continuous jobs. Another company is a construction company that hires directly workers for their projects. They also keep or regularize workers with good performance. For both companies, although the industry they partner with require low skilled workers (e.g. construction laborers), there is also a need for specialized skills and professionals such as carpenters, mason, tile center, engineers, architects, power trainers.

For laborers, they can be hired even though they have no special skills. Usually, their skills surfaced when they are on the job and the supervisors/engineers take note of those with potentials for specific jobs e.g. painting, mason, carpentry, etc. The initial requirements to qualify is age (should not be more than 55 years old), medical (must be fit to work), not involve in crime (NBI clearance) and some background on the position applied for.

For low-skilled workers, finding workers is not that difficult. There are cases though when those hired are not willing to work in areas far from their residence. These types of workers are in the company's pool and they can be called upon when they are available. The professionals are also generally available because they can work on several projects. The skills difficult to find are the highly specialized skills such as tile setters, mason, crane operators; the supply is limited.

TESDA certification is only required in some cases. The companies have their own trade test and it is done on the project site itself. They can also do the training themselves and hire seasonal workers (usually farmers who are out of work during drought or off-season) to train them on new skills. One company actually hires workers with no formal training and are trained on the project site as carpenters and construction workers for 10 months. The Department of Education supports this alternative learning programs through private companies.

The firms usually join job fairs or conduct their own job fairs to search for potential workers. They also partner with technical vocational schools or institutions that bring their graduates for employment to the firm. Referral by the current workers of the firm also works for them.

8.2. Partnership with SLP

The private firms that have hired SLP beneficiaries have no formal agreement with DSWD. They have been hired either through DSWD partner training institute or through referral by PDOs. One firm considers DSWD as a source of workers because the manager has heard about the training

programs so if there is high demand for a specific skill, the DSWD is one agency they go to for potential workers.

For employment through public agencies, this is mainly done in partnership with national government agencies such as the DPWH, DA, DAR. Under this arrangement, the DSWD and the partner national agency signs a MOA. In particular, DSWD has employed the largest number of SLP beneficiaries through its *Trabahong Lansangan* Program. In the MOU between DSWD and DPWH, DPWH allocates a percentage (20% to 40%) of its job requirements in the region to 4Ps beneficiaries. However, this MOU was not renewed after President Aquino's term. But those who were already hired and have been trained were retained by DPWH as regular job contract workers.

8.3. Assessment of SLP beneficiaries

So far, the private companies did not find anything special or challenging of the SLP or 4Ps beneficiaries they hired. They can do the job assigned to them. Their main concern is the transport cost. They had one only one case of absence without leave. The best way to help them is to provide additional training on values formation; they should not be spoiled but learn to value the opportunities and work given to them.

Likewise, DPWH also noted that the 4Ps SLP beneficiaries can do the job and can be trained. The job requirement is low skilled so the critical aspect is their attitude. Those who remained with the agency are generally industrious, hardworking and aggressive. Their main issue is the transportation cost and they also do not want to be assigned in barangays far from their homes. Another issue is providing the documents needed for employment in the government. The completion of documents usually takes time. DSWD should renew the MOU with DPWH so that the 4Ps/SLP beneficiaries can be assured of a slot. Without the partnership, 4Ps/SLP beneficiaries can still apply but there are no reserved slots for them.

9. Assessment of Program Outcomes and Success Indicators

This section provides an assessment of the identified success indicators of the program. It also proposes additional indicators that are intended to cover the additional dimensions identified in the assessment that needed to be measured to achieve a more definitive and comprehensive list of success indicators. The discussion covers the outcome level indicators only and does not cover the final goal of economic sufficiency for beneficiary households.

The Theory of Change of the project mentioned the following descriptions of indicators at the outcome level:

- End of Program Outcome: SLP participants engaged in quality livelihood and/or jobs
- Intermediate Outcomes: SLP participants engaged livelihood and/or jobs
- Immediate Outcome: (a) SLP participants accessed livelihood assets (physical, financial, human, social, natural); (b) SLP participants accessed assets protect services

These descriptions are generic and does not utilize the two tracks through which the program is implemented. The assessment identifies the two tracks, namely, Microenterprise Development (MD) and Employment Facilitation (EF) and goes on to identify the different track-based dimensions of outcomes.

9.1. Indicators of Microenterprise Development Success

The most popular measure of success in microenterprise development is an enterprise that is growing in sales, assets and/or employment. There is no need to expound on this commonly accepted indicator of success which is perhaps even the only indicator of success some would accept.

However, in the case of enterprises run by the poor, there are other dimensions of success that need to be considered. These are premised on their circumstances of having limited ability and resources. For entrepreneurs who may lack the ability or the resources to grow their business, it may be warranted that the business continuing to exist even without clear signs of growing can also be considered a form of success. The business satisfies daily needs of the household with the working capital sufficiently safeguarded enabling it to continue⁴. Schoar (2010) call these subsistence entrepreneurs. This is perhaps illustrated by the view of Hernando de Soto (1989) which argues that people in the informal sector are prevented by their circumstances from growing their enterprises. In the recent past, lack of financing was identified as the culprit. The experience and rigorous evaluations of microfinance programs, however, have shown that a host of other enabling factors may be necessary to grow the livelihood of the poor and move them out of poverty (Banerjee, et al., 2005).

Another dimension is that the owner, after a while running the enterprise, may find the risks of running the business too high compared to paid employment. When the opportunity presents itself, he may opt for paid employment and leave the business to other family members, hire someone outside the family to run the business for him or abandon it altogether. His experience of running the business may have also earned him qualifications desirable for paid employment. In addition, the network he had created while running the business may have revealed his desirable qualifications to prospective employers.

There are many reasons why an entrepreneur would move on to wage employment if the opportunity arise. One, de Mel, McKenzie, Woodruff (2010) points to a perspective attributed to Victor Tokman (2007) that is diametrically opposed to that of de Soto. He argued that many do informal sector work while waiting for an opportunity for wage work to open. In fact, Dillon and Stanton (2017) finds that even in a developed country like the US considerable proportion of entrepreneurs leave self-employment for wage work. Using the US Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) data from 1976 to 2011, they find that nearly half (40%) to those who enter self-employment return to paid work within five years and 25% return after only a year. Martinez, Puentes and Ruiz-Tagle (forthcoming) also argued that as labor market tightens with development,

⁴ This phenomenon is often called low ability equilibrium in development economics.

wage employment will become more attractive relative to self-employment. Running an enterprise may also require specific personal characteristic that is not common to all. For instance, Lazear (2002) argues that entrepreneurs need to be jacks-of-all trades because of the need to play many different roles. A wage worker, on the other hand, need to good only at a specific task. Workers may not know at the beginning if entrepreneurship is for them and want to test the waters. This sense of experimentation in entrepreneurship have even been recently highlighted in Kerr, Nanda and Rhodes-Kropf (2014).

From the foregoing discussion, the plausible indicators of success at the outcome level should include:

- growth business indicators including sales, assets and employment;
- business still existing until today;
- preferring employment for business with business passed on to another family member or a hired non-family member or even closed.

9.2. Indicators of Employability and Employment

The success in employment facilitation is usually characterized by the beneficiary having continuous employment for some desired period, e.g. three months. Additional desirable outcomes would include regularization and promotion. Underlying this view is that a single job is sufficient to supply the income needs of the worker. While this may be true for a highly qualified worker, this is rarely the case for the poor.

World Development Report 2013 that focuses on jobs has highlighted the now relatively well-known fact that lack of work does not define the poor. Data shows the unemployment rate of the poor is lower compared to others, e.g. young educated workers. This is intuitive given that the poor can't afford to be unemployed and is rarely completely not doing some economic activity. Given their meager qualifications, they are usually doing some low productivity economic activity that seldom occupies their time fully nor pay enough to finance their needs (Banerjee and Duflo, 2011). ILO (2011) estimates that as much 910 million or nearly 30% of the world's workers are living below UD\$2 a day. Philippine LFS data also shows that in 2012, for instance, as much as 37% (28% fully employed and 9% underemployed) of the underproductive workers⁵ are earning below subsistence (below food threshold) (Orbeta and Paqueo, 2014).

While employment is the critical outcome of the program, it will be useful to measure the intermediate outcome of employability as well. Employability would include measures on new skills acquired and existing skills improved or updated, work readiness and confidence of finding a job. Besides being important indicators on their own, these can also help explain the final impact on employment.

⁵ Consisting of the unemployed, underemployed and fully employed but earning below subsistence (or below the food threshold)

Given these perspectives the important success indicators for employment facilitation for SLP should include the following:

- Employed continuously for a period, e.g. three months
- Total number of jobs during the week
- Total number of hours worked during the week
- Total earnings / take home pay per week
- Period (e.g. weeks) since last primary employment
- Number of new skills acquired
- Number of existing skills improved or updated
- Confidence in finding a job within a specific period, e.g. 6 months. This can be measured by number of applications submitted or the interviews undertaken or participation in job fairs.

9.3. Results from the Survey of MD and EF Beneficiaries

Some of the abovementioned success indicators were generated using raw data from a survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries. The survey was conducted by PIDS and DSWD in October 2017. The results are preliminary and should be taken with caution.

For the MD beneficiaries, the data is restricted to beneficiaries whose businesses were set up within 2015; beneficiaries whose businesses benefited from SLP assistance within 2015, if they were running a business prior to SLP intervention; and beneficiaries who, if they were recipients of SLP funding assistance, received the assistance within 2015.

Tables 6 shows the distribution of group businesses and individual businesses in terms of business survival at the time of the survey. About 54.6% of group businesses that started in 2015 were still operating by October 2015. The survival rate among individual businesses is about the same. Note that the SLP encourages group enterprises although majority of beneficiaries prefer individual business. Group businesses especially cooperatives receive additional support from other government or non-government institutions in terms of market access, technology, funding/grants etc.

Table 6: MD business survival, as of October 2017

	Group business		Individual business	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Business has shut down	208	45.4%	373	42.3%
Business still operating	250	54.6%	458	52.0%
Missing values*	0	0.00%	50	5.7%
Total	458	100.0%	881	100.0%

* Missing values due to missing answers.

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries

Table 7 shows business survival among individual businesses by use of assistance. MD beneficiaries with individual businesses are classified as either having used the assistance to start a new business, or used the assistance to expand or maintain an existing business. The survival rate among businesses that existed prior to receipt of SLP assistance is 72.3%, compared to 37.4% among businesses that were started through SLP assistance.

Table 7: MD individual business survival as of October 2017, by use of assistance

	Used assistance to start new business		Used assistance to expand or maintain existing business		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Business has closed	277	54.0%	96	26.1%	373	42.3%
Business still operating	192	37.4%	266	72.3%	458	52.0%
Missing values*	44	8.6%	6	1.6%	50	5.7%
Total	513	100.0%	368	100.0%	881	100.0%

* Missing values due to missing answers.

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries

Table 8 shows the distribution of individual businesses in terms of growth in sales, assets, and employment. We classify businesses as having experienced positive growth, no growth, or negative growth. Growth was calculated as the change in sales, value of assets, and employment between two reference periods. The reference periods used are described in detail in the table notes. The figures on sales, assets, and employment growth are problematic owing to the large amount of missing data -- especially for sales, where 75.5% of values are missing. Ignoring missing data, the results show businesses are more or less evenly split between those whose sales grew, those whose sales were the same, and those whose sales fell. In terms of asset growth, businesses whose assets did not grow outnumber those that did, though not by a very large margin. Meanwhile, in terms employment, a large majority of business experienced no employment growth.

Table 8: Growth in sales, assets, and employment among individual businesses

	Sales		Assets		Employment	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Positive growth	73	8.3%	224	25.4%	34	3.9%
No growth	68	7.7%	330	37.5%	589	66.9%
Negative growth	75	8.5%	16	1.8%	61	6.9%
Missing values*	665	75.5%	311	35.3%	197	22.4%
Total	881	100.0%	881	100.0%	881	100.0%

* Missing values due to missing answers.

Note: For sales, we measure the change in sales from the first turnover since business startup or use of assistance on existing business, to sales in the last turnover prior to shutdown (for non-surviving businesses) or prior to current turnover period (for surviving businesses). For assets, we measure the value of assets added to the business from

the first month of operation since startup use of assistance on existing business to the month before it shut down (for non-surviving businesses) or the past month of operation (for surviving businesses). For employment, we measure the change in employment from the first month of operation since startup or use of assistance on existing business to the last month of operation prior to shutdown (for non-surviving businesses) or prior to the current month of operation (for surviving businesses).

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries

Table 9 shows a cross tabulation of the sales, asset, and employment growth with business survival. This would reveal differences in business indicators between surviving and non-surviving businesses. Surprisingly, surviving and non-surviving businesses' sales and employment indicators are quite similar. Both non-surviving and surviving businesses are more or less evenly split between those with positive growth, no growth, and negative growth, ignoring the large number of missing sales data. Similarly, the large majority of both surviving and non-surviving businesses saw no change in employment. Meanwhile, surviving and non-surviving businesses seem to differ in terms of asset growth, ignoring the large number of missing asset data among surviving businesses. Among non-surviving businesses, there are twice more businesses that experienced no asset growth than those that experienced positive asset growth, while among surviving businesses, businesses that saw positive asset growth outnumber those experienced no growth, albeit by a small margin.

Table 9: Current status of individual business, by sales growth, asset growth, and employment growth

	Business has closed		Business still operating		Missing values *		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I. Sales								
Positive growth	36	10%	37	8%	0	0%	73	8.3%
No growth	41	11%	27	6%	0	0%	68	7.7%
Negative growth	44	12%	31	7%	0	0%	75	8.5%
Missing values*	252	68%	363	79%	50	100%	665	75.5%
Total	373	100%	458	100%	50	100%	881	100.0%
II. Assets								
Positive growth	112	30.0%	112	24.5%	0	0.0%	224	25.4%
No growth	231	61.9%	99	21.6%	0	0.0%	330	37.5%
Negative growth	6	1.6%	10	2.2%	0	0.0%	16	1.8%
Missing values*	24	6.4%	237	51.7%	50	100.0%	311	35.3%
Total	373	100.0%	458	100.0%	50	100.0%	881	100.0%
III. Employment								
Positive growth	8	2.1%	26	5.7%	0	0.0%	34	3.9%
No growth	266	71.3%	323	70.5%	0	0.0%	589	66.9%
Negative growth	26	7.0%	35	7.6%	0	0.0%	61	6.9%
Missing values*	73	19.6%	74	16.2%	50	100.0%	197	22.4%
Total	373	100.0%	458	100.0%	50	100.0%	881	100.0%

**Missing values due to missing answers.

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries.

For EF beneficiaries, the data is restricted to beneficiaries who, if they found a job after receiving SLP assistance, did so in 2015. Table 10 shows the distribution of EF beneficiaries into those who did not find a job after receipt of assistance, those who did but were employed in the job for less than three consecutive months, and those who did and were employed in the job for at least three consecutive months. About 40.6% reported not finding a job after receipt of assistance, 6.8% reported finding a job but stayed in the said job for less than three months, and 37.8% reported finding a job and stayed in the job for three months or more. Note that “not finding employment” does not necessarily mean failure of the program since there are possibly “new” skills acquired by the beneficiaries which have not been captured in the survey.

Table 10: EF beneficiaries’ immediate employment after receipt of SLP assistance

	Freq.	Percent
Did not find job	642	40.6%
Found job but employed for less than three months	108	6.8%
Found job and employed for three months or more	598	37.8%
Missing values*	234	14.8%
Total	1,582	100.0%

* Missing values due to missing answers

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries.

Table 11 shows the distribution of EF beneficiaries in terms of the compensation they received in their first month of employment in the job they found through SLP assistance. About 90% reported earning below PhP10,000 in their first month in the job. About 55.5% reported earning between PhP5,000 and PhP10,000, while 35.4% reported earning below PhP5,000.

Table 11: EF beneficiaries’ first month’s compensation in job found through SLP

	Found a job and employed less than three months		Found a job and employed at least three months		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Below 5000	43	39.8%	207	34.6%	250	35.4%
5000 to below 10000	55	50.9%	337	56.4%	392	55.5%
10000 to below 15000	8	7.4%	37	6.2%	45	6.4%
15000 to below 20000	1	0.9%	12	2.0%	13	1.8%
20000 and above	1	0.9%	3	0.5%	4	0.6%
Missing values	0	0.0%	2	0.3%	2	0.3%
Total	108	100.0%	598	100.0%	706	100.0%

Source of basic data: Survey of 2015 SLP beneficiaries

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

Since the inception of the SLP Program in 2011, the program has gone through policy enhancements to improve program implementation and chances of success for both the enterprise and employment tracks. Majority of those served by the program have expressed positive outcomes from the SLP intervention. The specialized trainings in particular have provided additional skills that enabled some beneficiaries to establish enterprises or to get employed. There is a felt improvement in the standard of living experienced from additional household income, business expansion and a stable source of employment. For those in the EF track, there are also non-monetary benefits such as motivation for higher studies, having a support system, and better links to employers/employment. For those in the MD track, higher income has provided the finances to support for the college education of child and improved values of their children.

However, the program beneficiaries appear to be the 4Ps Parent Leaders or parent officers themselves and their households or friends/relatives. It was observed in all areas that these leaders and officers are the usual respondents that attend focus group discussions. There is apparently limited contact between the IPDOs and other households within the group probably not by choice but because of the heavy caseload of the IPDOs. The IPDOs consider the Parent Leaders as “unpaid” volunteers who assist them cascade information to the barangays and to the individual households. The downside of this strategy is that the selection of program beneficiaries and assessment of their readiness or willingness to participate can be biased. It is possible that other members have limited access to SLP interventions. Participation in SLP is apparently not unique. An individual beneficiary can have access to two or three trainings or can be an MD beneficiary and EF beneficiary at the same time (although in different time periods).

By design the IPDOs should have been supported by the core community group (CCG) that comprise of the Parent Leaders, City/Municipal Action Team, Barangay representatives, etc, in the selection of participants and projects but support from other members of CCG has been generally weak.

The framework of SLP is based on community driven enterprise development that can work best when cooperation among local partners or internal convergence is working. Otherwise, the program will be based on need, whereby those who participate are mainly influenced by their immediate needs or concerns. Likewise, the IPDOs given limited support are driven by outputs instead of an operative assessment of local opportunities and risks.

Another concern raised was the centralized project review and approval process, which delays the implementation and outputs. The process is also affected by changes in program policies that are to be implemented a day after receipt of the memorandum from the DSWD Central Office. The policy change at times require IPDOs to submit additional requirement or at worst change/reevaluate projects submitted for approval. Moreover, the policy on replacement of beneficiaries is constrained by the policy of binding projects to specific individuals, who may simply drop out of the list for several reasons. The requirement on waivers and search for alternative beneficiary also delays project approvals.

The beneficiaries do not seem to relate social preparation activities to the benefits gained from the program. They consider these activities mainly as the orientation phase. Moreover, the establishment of associations is viewed as a deterrent instead of a determinant for success. The same sentiments have also been expressed in the earlier studies on SLP. The reason for this is the added burden of being accountable on the liabilities of other members.

In terms of partnership building and improving the chances of success for those in the EF track, enhancement in partnerships with training institutions and PESOs have been observed. This is reflected in the SLP focus on training cum employment and increased interaction with PESOs although outputs on EF has been mainly attributed to partnerships with training institutes. IPDOs are also putting less effort on direct partnerships with private employers and uses only this modality when it is the private employer who seeks DSWD support.

Partnership with PESOs has yet to be strengthened. The partnership has not been formalized thus the level of support varies from one region to another. In other areas, the partnership is stronger with specialized lanes or activities for SLP or Pantawid beneficiaries. In some, SLP beneficiaries are not given special treatment. They are treated the same way as our applicants in the locality.

There has also been improvement in the structure of M&E for SLP. Unlike in the past, there is now a dedicated PDO for results based monitoring. The structure has also been in place but this have yet to be tested.

Overall, DSWD should pay attention to five management issues: One, strengthen the role of the CCG or DSWD internal convergence in participant and project identification. A recent study on this convergence strategy noted weaknesses in governance, leadership, business processes and capacities (Albert and Dacuycuy 2017). Two, enhance PDOs capacity. As the program grows larger and more sophisticated, there is need for additional staff time and expertise. Third, innovate ways for track selection and participant profiling through development of characteristic-based assessment tool on beneficiary readiness and capacities. Fourth, improve the process of project review to shorten the waiting time for approval. Fifth, develop the SLP M&E. It is essential for data analysis, transparency and enhancement of policies. An impact evaluation has to be undertaken to provide better evidence of program success. The benefits from SLP interventions have to be defined from that of the 4Ps program.

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