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SUSTAINING REAL CHANGE

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THE LEGACY IN THE BUDGET:

Sustaining Real Change for Future Generations

By: Crispin Mahrion B. Abacan

The first full-year budget that was implemented by the Duterte Administration, the expenditure program for Fiscal Year 2017, was crafted to support strategies and programs intended to address the erosion of faith in the government – a problem it viewed to be caused by crime and corruption in and outside of the bureaucracy.

It was a budget that would give life – flesh and bone – to the promise of change that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte had made and committed himself to fulfill from Day 1 of his Administration. Change that would have positive and lasting impact on all the Filipino people. Thus began the nation's journey to real change.

Five years after, the Administration, through the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), submitted for the approval of the Congress a proposed National Budget of PhP5.024 trillion. This total budget is equivalent to 22.8 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), and has been designed to bolster the nation's capability to overcome the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and recover from its impacts. It is 11.5 percent higher than the FY 2021 appropriation of PhP4.506 trillion, making it the government's biggest budget ever.

Despite the global health crisis that the country expects to continue to grapple with in 2022, this last full-year budget prepared by the Duterte Administration does not depart from the goals and priorities of its 0+10 Socioeconomic Agenda and the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022. Rather, it aims to bridge the past and present with the future, ensuring that the gains achieved will not be eroded but instead provide a strong foundation on which to build and move forward.

Indeed, this proposed 2022 National Budget will continue to deliver on the commitment of the Duterte Administration to improve the lives of all Filipinos, by "Sustaining the Legacy of Real Change for Future Generations," through a solid bedrock of principles and the right spending priorities.

Spending Priorities

Apart from guaranteeing resilience during the global health crisis, the FY 2022 Budget also recognizes, and thus prioritizes, economic growth and infrastructure development as key drivers in the country's strong and genuine recovery in the coming year. Reflecting this, the budget for next year rests on three main pillars, which also correspond to the goals of its implementation: 1) Building Resilience amidst the Pandemic, 2) Sustaining the Momentum Towards Recovery; and 3) Continuing the Legacy of Infrastructure Development.

Building Resilience amidst the Pandemic

The emergence of new variants of COVID-19 suggests that the health crisis may still continue in the near future. Thus, the budget addresses several gaps in the country's healthcare system to effectively respond to and limit the pandemic's impact.

A part of the budget has been allocated for social services to fund health-related programs and projects and provide cash subsidies for the hardest-hit sectors. Additional healthcare professionals will also be hired to meet the increasing demand for healthcare providers and the services they offer. The development and upgrade of health facilities, as well as the procurement of medical equipment and ambulances, will also be pursued. In addition, the government will sustain the National Health Insurance Program which subsidizes the health insurance premiums of indigent families and senior citizens.



Health Sector Budget PhP252.4 B

COVID-19 Response Activities/Programs:



COVID-19 GeneXpert Cartridges
PhP5.1 B



Personal Protective Equipment
PhP819 M

Regular Health Programs:



National Health Insurance Program
PhP80.0 B



Health Facilities Enhancement Program
PhP19.6 B



Human Resources for Health Program
PhP17.0 B



Medical Assistance to Indigent Patients
PhP17.0 B

Sustaining the Momentum towards Recovery

The economy likewise took a hit from the pandemic, which impeded the country's growth and development efforts and even reversed some of the hard-fought gains achieved in past years. Seeking to address this, the budget for 2022 is designed not only to re-energize the economy, but also to provide essential funding support to a variety of individuals, communities, sectors, and industries that are vital partners in genuine and sustained socioeconomic recovery.

Central to this approach are various social protection and livelihood programs to cushion the impact of the health crisis on the poor and vulnerable individuals and families, as well as disadvantaged/displaced workers and repatriated OFWs, among others. Programs that provide budgetary assistance for education and digitization efforts, as well as industries like agriculture, are also given significant funding.



Pantawid Familyang Pilipino Program
PhP115.7 B



Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens
PhP23.5 B



Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) Program
PhP21.0 B



Emergency Repatriation Program
PhP11.2 B



Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education
PhP49.7 B



Sustainable Livelihood Program
PhP4.9 B



Irrigation Services (NIA)
PhP21.8 B



National Rice Program
PhP15.7 B

Hope for the Future

The Duterte Administration is optimistic that the FY 2022 Budget will help the country recover from the impacts of the pandemic, restoring a sense of normalcy in the lives of Filipinos. This is seen to take the country a step closer to achieving the Filipino people's aspiration for a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life through the various programs, projects, and activities planned for next year. With the Duterte Administration's legacy, there is reason to be hopeful about the future.

Continuing the Legacy of Infrastructure Development

Continued investment in public infrastructure remains a strategy of the government to ramp up economic activities and spur the recovery, particularly by modernizing the public transportation system in the country. To achieve this, a budget of PhP1.181 trillion is allocated for the Build, Build, Build Program next year.

Taking the lead in this pursuit are the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Transportation, which are tasked to address issues on congestion, mobility, and flooding, among other things, while managing and promoting safety protocols in the use of public transportation and during construction of various infrastructures, such as roads, rails, and bridges.



Build, Build, Build Program PhP1,180.5 B



Road Network Development Program
PhP148.9 B



Flood Management Program
PhP131.1 B



Bridge Program
PhP35.4 B



Rail Transport
PhP110.9 B



Maritime Infrastructure Program
PhP716 M



Asset Preservation Program
PhP63.3 B



ON THE ROAD TO FULL DEVOLUTION

By: Joy S. Almazan

With the issuance of Executive Order No. 138 on June 1, 2021, and the release of its implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) last July 1, the country is set for the full devolution of certain functions of the Executive Branch to the local government units (LGUs).

DBM at the helm

Guiding the country on its devolution journey is the Committee on Devolution (ComDev), led by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as chair and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as Co-Chair.

The ComDev, created under EO No. 138, is tasked to undertake critical functions such as the evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the devolution transition plans (DTPs) of national government agencies and LGUs, as well as ensuring compliance of national government officials or employees and local chief executives or personnel.

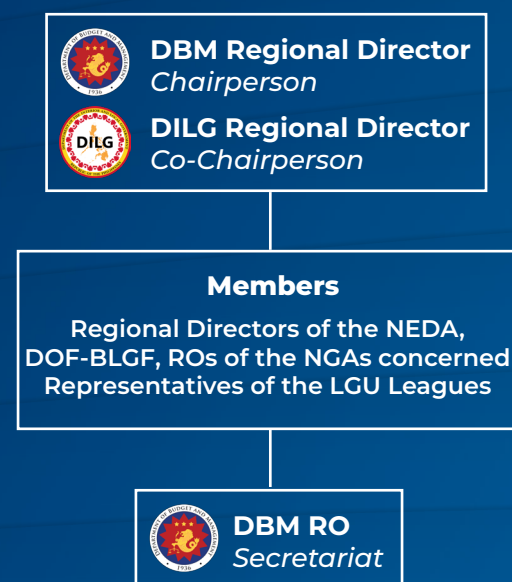
"The DBM definitely plays a critical role in this devolution journey. Aside from being designated as Chairperson and Secretariat of the ComDev, our regional offices will head the regional level counterpart of the ComDev – the Regional ComDevs," said Undersecretary Rolando U. Toledo who also serves as DBM Spokesperson and Chair of the ComDev's Sub-Committee on Communications Strategy.

"The Regional ComDevs are tasked to cascade policies and guidelines of the ComDev to the regional and field offices, strengthen the coordination between the NGAs and the LGUs to facilitate smooth transition to full devolution, and monitor and assess the implementation of the DTPs of the NGAs concerned and the LGUs in the region, among others, Undersecretary Toledo added.

Committee on Devolution



Regional ComDev



The road to devolution is never easy, but it is also not impossible as long as the entities concerned are informed and guided accordingly, and are capacitated to ensure that the devolved functions and services are properly executed.

As part of its key functions, the ComDev, through its Sub-Committee on Communications Strategy and with the assistance of USAID's DELIVER Project, has developed a Communications Plan which contains the core messaging and strategies to inform the NGAs, LGUs, and other stakeholders concerned on the Supreme Court ruling on the Mandanas-Garcia petition; address information gaps; guide entities concerned on the implementation of EO 138 and its IRR, including the preparation and execution of the Devolution Transition Plans; and improve the cooperation and collaboration between the national and local governments in the full devolution effort. Likewise, as part of the communications effort, Communications Focal Persons have been designated in NGAs concerned, both oversight and affected agencies, to aid in the information drive.

Prepping for 2022:

The Devolution Transition Plans

With less than a year before the implementation of the Mandanas ruling, NGAs concerned, such as the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health, Public Works and Highways, and Labor and Employment, have crafted their respective Devolution Transition Plans (DTPs), which identify the functions and services to be transferred to the LGUs. A Devolution Transition Committee within each of the agencies has been created to facilitate the crafting of their DTPs.

As indicated in the IRR of EO 138, NGAs have 120 days after the EO's effectivity to submit their DTPs to the DBM for evaluation and approval.

The LGUs are also tasked to prepare their DTPs in close coordination with the NGAs. Their DTPs, which will serve as their roadmap in the devolution effort, should contain a report on the current state of devolved functions and services; phasing of full assumption of devolved functions, services, and facilities; capacity development agenda; and resource mobilization strategy, among others.

On August 11, 2021, the DBM and DILG issued Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2021-1 to provide the guidelines in the preparation of the LGU DTPs. Under said JMC, provinces, highly

urbanized cities (HUCs), independent component cities (ICCs), and all cities and municipalities in the NCR are expected to complete and have their DTPs approved within 120 calendar days after the issuance of the JMC. The DBM and DILG likewise issued JMC No. 2021-2 on August 12 to guide national government agencies in the preparation of their respective DTPs.

Both LGUs and NGAs concerned should consult civil society organizations (CSOs) before implementing their DTPs. To foster transparency, accountability, and good governance, CSOs, non-government organizations, and people's organizations are highly encouraged to partake in the crafting, execution, and monitoring of the DTPs.

Equitable growth for all

Not all LGUs are equal, especially in terms of fiscal resources. To address this reality, the government, through EO 138 and its IRR, has provided a Growth Equity Fund (GEF) which will aid poor and disadvantaged LGUs in implementing the devolved functions and services.

"To gradually enable the full and efficient implementation of the functions and services devolved to the local government units (LGUs), in view of the implementation of the Supreme Court Decision on the Mandanas Ruling, the DBM proposed the inclusion of a PhP10-Billion GEF in the FY 2022 National Expenditure Program. Said fund shall be used as financial assistance to identified poor, disadvantaged and lagging LGUs for the implementation of their identified priority programs/activities/projects in their respective Devolution Transition Plans," explained Undersecretary for the Organization and Systems Improvement Group and the Information and Communications Technology Group Kim Robert De Leon.

"The GEF is intended to address issues on marginalization, unequal development, high poverty incidence, and disparities in the net fiscal capacities of LGUs. Consistent with our mandate and as Chair of the Committee on Devolution, the DBM commits to work with the DILG, DOF, NEDA and, most importantly, LGUs to ensure the equitable, performance-based, and time-bound allocation and distribution of the fund to the LGUs," Undersecretary De Leon added.

The road to full devolution is still a long journey ahead. But with each step we take, we help empower the LGUs, the local communities, and ultimately our nation and the Filipino people.



A SALUTE TO DBM'S LADY EXTRAORDINAIRE

By: Joy S. Almazan, BITS

Her initials aptly describe who and what she is as a person and as a public servant. LBP – loyal, brilliant, and a (dedicated) professional.

Through all of the 43 years of committed service in the Department of Budget and Management, Undersecretary Laura B. Pascua, who retired from the government service last June 2021, has shown her loyalty not only to the DBM, but to the nation as well, devoting practically her entire career life to selfless public service.

Usec. Pascua started her four-decade journey in the DBM in 1978, when she was hired as a consultant for the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC).

"I had just finished the coursework in MA Economics at the UP School of Economics and I heard there was an opening at the DBCC Staff, which was then holding office at the BSP Multistorey Building," Usec. Pascua recalls.

"I went and was interviewed by the very impressive Chita Subido, who was then the Chief of the DBCC Staff. I was charmed by her, and the fact that the consultant work that was available concerned fiscal and macroeconomics, topics that interested me in my Economics coursework, enticed me to take on the job," she continues.

Challenged by the research papers she was asked to prepare and enjoying the company of fellow DBCC consultants who had excellent analytical skills and who liked to play *pusoy* during the lunch break and take the jeepney home together, such as former DBM Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Gerry Duran, Usec. Pascua stayed on.

Five years later she became a Chief Fiscal Planning Specialist, and afterwards moved up the ranks to Director, Assistant Secretary and Undersecretary. From time to time, she had also been designated as Officer-in-Charge of the Department.

Her career growth in the Department was as stellar as her academic achievements. Even as a young girl, Usec. Pascua was known for her brilliance and passion for learning, graduating valedictorian of her high school class and Cum Laude in college. She also holds a master's degree in MS Financial Studies from the University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom.

Her exposure to various fiscal work and developments kept Usec. Pascua captivated by her job.

"Through the years, I had the opportunity to be exposed to other aspects of Fiscal Planning – work such as setting macroeconomic and fiscal targets with the NEDA and the DOF, and negotiating with the International Monetary Fund during the difficult years of the mid 80s and 90s. This opportunity to be in the midst of fiscal and macroeconomic decision-making for Government, and seeing the developments unfold at close range, was what kept me enthralled in the DBM," Usec. Pascua shares.

"I was also given the opportunity to understand the new public expenditure management (PEM) under Ed Campos,

one of its prime movers in the World Bank, and the shift from focusing at processes and procedures to budgeting outcomes and outputs. Likewise, I had the opportunity to work with him on the passage of Republic Act No. 9184 (Government Procurement Reform Act) in Congress, and to learn the value of working together with peers in the DBM and other departments, with the civil society organizations and the media. These experiences, as well as those in connection with the Rationalization Program, the Organizational Performance Indicator Framework and the Performance-based Bonus, gave me the fundamental learnings on how to implement expenditure management and budgeting reforms. But the supporting inputs of the Directors, Officials and staff of the DBM, added to the doability and richness of these reforms which we see now," the retired Undersecretary adds.

A quiet worker, Usec. Pascua's unparalleled contributions, insights, and service have helped transform our country's public financial management system to one that is relevant, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the times. Proof of this is the smooth transition to the Cash Budgeting System (CBS), which was adopted in 2019. Said reform is envisioned to promote the timely and faster execution of government programs.

Usec. Pascua considers the CBS as one of the most important reforms she had the privilege to be involved in.

"This single reform is really a game changer because it ties up neatly the importance of the other previous reforms we had set in place, such as the early and streamlined procurement, the GAA as a Allotment Order, Program Budgeting, efficient cash management through the Treasury Single Account and Modified Disbursement System, and sound internal control in executing the Budget within the fiscal year. The successful installation and implementation of the CBS will enable the government to deliver more services promptly to the public, put an end to the problem of underspending in government, and enhance the ability to contribute to the achievement of economic growth targets," Usec. Pascua explains.

A reform champion through and through, Usec. Pascua still sees herself contributing to the government's PFM endeavors and to the DBM reforms even while on retirement. But, she hastens to add, "on a less hectic pace." These days there will hopefully be more time for "fixing our house and garden" and "relearning watercolor painting."

The work philosophy of the Undersecretary through all her years in the DBM has been shaped by several influences.

The words of St. Francis of Assisi – "Start by doing what is necessary; then do what is possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible" – have always guided her approach to reform and change.

"I believe it is only by first opening up ourselves to the possibility of change and reform, and accepting these, that

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THE EXPERIENCED NEOPHYTE

By: Rey Angelo Jose M. Gonzaga, BITS

Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Undersecretary Herman Billones Jumilla has capped his career as a public official and bade farewell to professional audits and budget reports on July 16, 2021, after four decades of government service.

Born and raised in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Usec. Jumilla uprooted his life from the southern city and moved to Metro Manila after having been appointed to the DBM Central Office by President Rodrigo Duterte on February 12, 2018. Usec. Jumilla admits that he could not help feeling like a neophyte then, faced with the challenges that came with his appointment, despite a solid career as OIC-Supervising Auditor in the Commission on Audit in Davao City.

He recalls the initial days in this new assignment, as he expresses gratitude to his colleagues at the DBM today, who made the transition easier. "Being surrounded with highly capable and dedicated employees from the other offices and bureaus within the DBM made my stay a lot less difficult," Usec. Jumilla says.

As an executive who's handled tasks at the local and regional levels, working at the Central Office gave him opportunities not only to learn about the dynamics of a national government agency, but also to get a clearer picture of the entire bureaucracy.

Usec. Jumilla feels one of his greatest achievements during his tenure in the Department was spearheading the production and issuance of the DBM Primer on Local Budgeting. He takes pride in this particular project, realizing its potential positive impact on the improved service and performance of local government units (LGUs), such as provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays.

Having contributed to the goal of bringing the DBM Regional Offices closer to the Central Office is another of the accomplishments that Usec. Jumilla cherishes. Several other innovations and projects are also attributed to the Undersecretary, but he humbly notes that these were all achieved through the concerted efforts of the rest of the Department, whom he refers to as his DBM family.

Being away from his *real* family, who are all still based in Davao City, was not easy for the Undersecretary. Dividing time and attention between home and office became quite taxing for him, especially during the pandemic. Thus, when asked about the things he will miss about the Department, Usec. Jumilla lists his surrogate family at the frontline.

"The entire DBM family will be missed, considering the relationships that I nurtured with employees and co-workers at different levels – from the utility and other outsourced personnel up to the members of the Executive Committee," he says.

He adds that he will also miss the opportunity to travel abroad and the official trips to almost all regions in the Philippines.

Beyond his already busy life in the workplace, Usec. Jumilla is also a connoisseur of music. Not only is he a fairly good singer, as his wife and children readily attest, he also dabbles in playing musical instruments such as the guitar and harmonica. Aside from this, his interest in sports is primarily focused on bowling, which he enjoys playing in his spare time.

The Undersecretary sees his retirement as a chance to take it slow, with no thought or mention for now of a possible business venture or a brand new job. It is evident that his focus after he officially steps out of his work persona will be family.

"After more than four decades in government service, I believe it is time for me to spend my retirement years with my wife and my youngest son, who is a special child. Then probably, if the situation normalizes, visit my other children and their families abroad."

Usec. Jumilla also plans to be one with nature during his retirement. And this includes being a "plantito," he adds.

This newly-gained luxury of time will also allow him to trace his roots, metaphorically and physically. "I would really want to go back to farming, which I used to do during my student days, and even in my early employment years, when I was still assigned in our province," he says.

After four decades of public service, Usec. Jumilla simply wants to be remembered by his colleagues as a person who held his position with a high degree of professionalism, competence, integrity, and humility. His parting words of wisdom to the DBM community emanate the kind of memory that he wants to leave them with.

"Government employees exist for the sole reason of providing accountable public services, keeping in mind that the welfare of the people is not their paramount consideration – IT SHOULD BE THEIR ONLY CONSIDERATION," Usec. Jumilla concludes.

TALES FROM THE FRONT DESK

Part II

By: Rey Angelo Jose M. Gonzaga, BITS



Anna Patricia P. Tugade
Office of the Undersecretary for Internal Audit

Like many Executive Assistants (EAs), Anna Patricia P. Tugade checks off a lengthy to-do list to keep things running efficiently in her office. She goes above and beyond to provide extensive support to her principal, while serving as running point on a number of critical tasks in and around the office.

"I do a little bit of everything, switching between a multitude of tasks that vary daily," Tugade says. "What I could be doing today may be different for the next consecutive days."

In addition to providing extensive support to her principal, Tugade's day-to-day responsibilities include communicating and coordinating with other DBM offices for demand-driven tasks, preparing or reviewing audit reports submitted to her office, drafting action documents for requests of other DBM offices, attending various meetings and highlighting discussion points, managing the schedules of the Undersecretary and his staff, as well as conducting research and preparing presentations for specific purposes.

While she has only been in the position for less than a year, she has already learned a great deal from the demands and trials consistent with the nature of her work. For Tugade, the value-added learning from these situations motivates her the most to accomplish her tasks.

With her responsibilities as an EA, Tugade has proven to be a crucial part of her team and her office. Aiming to contribute value to her office and to the DBM constantly, she puts a premium on her commitment to excellence in public service.



Maria Eleanor S. Isleta
Office of the Undersecretary for Internal Audit

Less than a year into her stint at the DBM and one desk move later, Maria Eleanor S. Isleta has found herself in the shoes of an EA for the Office of the Undersecretary for Internal Audit.

When asked about her personal goals at work, she says, "I want to prove that I can always perform well no matter how hard the job or task is. I have a penchant for accomplishing tasks that challenge my capabilities and



Jenah Flor G. Lagdameo
Office of the Undersecretary for Organization and Systems Improvement Group

Challenging yourself is the only path which leads to growth. It's a saying Jenah Flor G. Lagdameo believes and lives by.

Two years into her own journey in the DBM, Lagdameo continues to challenge herself with new opportunities that come her way – from trainings and seminars, to new roles and assignments.

While some challenges may seem demanding at times, Lagdameo views overcoming them as her way of building confidence in herself and in her performance at work. This confidence, along with her continued determination to tackle even the toughest of challenges, enables her to continually improve her skills and competencies.

As an EA in the Office of the Undersecretary, Lagdameo is mainly responsible for tasks under the Office of the Secretary-Technical Review Unit (OSEC-TRU). Her day-to-day work routine includes reviewing and evaluating requests of local government units for financial assistance, processing Special Allotment Release Orders and Notices of Cash Allocation for such requests, and attending relevant meetings with her immediate supervisor.

A voracious learner, Lagdameo is most motivated by the rewards from constantly acquiring knowledge and competencies to expand her skill set and further improve herself.

In her present position, she continues, she is able to continue learning while collaborating across different functions. This serves as her foundation to never back down from a challenge, seizing every opportunity that comes her way.

push me to work beyond my assumed limits." For her, this fuels her excitement and passion for work.

Besides her daily office routine of drafting memoranda, AWAOs, budget requests, as well as assisting her principal in his demand-driven tasks, Isleta also performs a vital role in the support system for the other technical and administrative staff in her office. "I usually provide support by carrying out administrative tasks and coordinating with other DBM offices as needed," she adds.

Taking inspiration from her principal, Isleta continues to put her best foot forward in accomplishing her tasks as an EA. "I am always encouraged to do well because of Usec. Aguilar's passion and dedication at work. His enthusiasm in performing his duties is indeed contagious, serving as a constant reminder for us to give our best in whatever we do," Isleta shares.

As an EA, she aims to perform well under any circumstance and accomplish tasks ahead of time. Bearing these goals in mind, Isleta always finds a way to deliver on time and perform effectively and efficiently.

Weathering the Challenges through Innovation

e-EFFICIENCY AMID THE PANDEMIC

By: Emil John T. Manguerra, BITS

Since COVID-19 hit the Philippines in early 2020, the government has imposed quarantine measures and varying levels of lockdowns that have largely affected work operations. For the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and probably even for most of the other offices, one of the biggest challenges has been to ensure continued and efficient operations despite a remote work setup.

Thanks to technology, the DBM, through its Information and Communications Technology System Service (ICTSS) and in collaboration with various DBM offices, has developed and implemented these innovations to address the challenges of a working and performing bureaucracy amid the pandemic:



Action Document Releasing System (ADRS) – facilitates the release of approved DBM Action Documents in digital format directly to the authorized users of recipient agencies, specifically for the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO). The digital advice of notice of cash allocation issued (ANCAI) can also be accessed through the ADRS. The adoption and implementation of digital ANCAI emanate from the provisions of Republic Act (RA) No. 8792, also known as the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000 and RA No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business Act.



Knowledge Management Library (KML) – a unified search engine for the Document Management System (DMS) and e-Tech Library for seamless search functionality and linkage of documents across both KM Tools.



GSuite with Unlimited Storage – an upgrade provided to the DBM Gmail accounts from the previous 30 gigabytes (GB) storage to an unlimited storage capacity.



Strategic Performance Information Management System (SPIMS) – a cross-office project between the ICTSS and the Corporate Planning and Management Service (CPMS) to automate the creation of the Office Performance Commitment Reporting (OPCR) and Office Performance Accomplishment Reporting (OPAR) for better management, monitoring, and faster approval of the OPCR and OPAR.



ePayslip – a cross-office project between the ICTSS and Administrative Service (AS) to provide an electronic copy of the DBM employee payslip.



Leave Management System (LMS) – a cross-office project between the ICTSS and AS to automate the means and monitoring for DBM employees on the application of leave and monetization of extra leave credits. It also provides a monitoring tool to track the correct number of Vacation Leave, Sick Leave, Compensatory Time Off (CTO) Leave Credits, Forced Leave, Monetization, and Special Privilege Leave.



Rewards and Recognition (R&R) – a cross-office project between the ICTSS and Administrative Service (AS). The Project aims to serve as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the AS to track the Incentives, Pending Cases Status, Employee Pending Cases, Rewards Packages, Awards, Awards Testimonials, Employee Administrative Cases, Granting Institution, Rewards, and Testimonials, among others. The system also helps determine whether a DBM employee is eligible for an award and/or incentive.



Recognition and Use of Digital Documents – The ICTSS issued Department Order No. 16, s. 2020, which institutionalizes the recognition and use of digital documents in all communications and transactions of the DBM with internal and external stakeholders.



Policy and Procedure on the Use of Digital Signatures in Internal DBM Documents – The ICTSS issued Department Order No. 17, s. 2020, which promotes paperless office productivity while maintaining information authenticity and integrity in the digital setup.

Most of these innovations, ICTSS Director Andrea Celene Magtalas revealed, were intended to address the need to reduce the number of physical transactions, thus controlling potential virus transmission. "The work from home set-up has made it difficult for documents to be signed physically. Moreover, most of the documents are stored in the office and getting a physical copy is too risky given the rising cases of the virus. Also, a lot of DBM services, both internal and external, require hard copies to be processed. All of the innovations introduced by the ICTSS have addressed these challenges," Dir. Magtalas said.

The ICTSS said additional cross-office projects are expected to be released before the end of 2021. These include the Strategic Performance and Information Management System (SPIMS), which will automate the Office Performance Commitment and Report (OPCR) and the Office Performance Accomplishment Report (OPAR).

Also included is the Leave Management System (LMS) that automates the filing of Vacation Leaves, Sick Leaves, and monitors the DBM employees' Compensatory-Time-Off (CTO) credits, Forced Leave, Monetization, and Special Privilege Leave.

Lastly, the Knowledge Management Library (KML) will serve as a unified search engine for the DMS and e-Tech Library for seamless search functionality and linkage of documents across both KM Tools.

"We do not know when this pandemic will end. But, what we know is that we can weather the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, through innovation," Dir. Magtalas stressed.

THE 2021 FEMALE OPPORTUNITY INDEX:

Philippines Ranks 41st in Female Opportunity and Achievement

Women around the world have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has deepened and widened the gender inequalities – both at work and at home – and heightened the struggles that women face daily.

Despite these great challenges, however, we have seen female heads of government leading the world in the way they manage the pandemic, heroic health care workers, comprised mostly of women, and other female figures who continue to take steps to promote and advance gender equality in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.

To further explore these current realities, a study was conducted to look into advancements in equality and career opportunities for women in selected countries with comparable data.

The results of the study were released as the Female Opportunity Index, published in July 2021. It also looked into political and corporate leadership, gender wage gaps, legal support, maternity leave, and more.

Total women in government - percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments, and the percentage of women in ministerial positions as of Jan. 1, 2021.

Women in management – share of female employees in managerial positions; share of women in senior and middle management positions; the number of active companies founded after 2010 with at least one female founder; workplace rights (laws) – whether women and men have the same legal rights and opportunities in the workplace; and workplace rights (attitudes) – percentage of the population who disagree with the statement “it is perfectly acceptable for any woman in your family to have a paid job outside the home if she wants one.”

Women in entrepreneurship – percentage of companies with at least one female founder, female participation in ownership, greater than 50% female ownership, etc.; parity between men and women to secure land and non-land assets; percentage of women among people aged 15 or above who have an account at a financial institution.

The study involved a survey of 100 countries around the world with comparable data on women in the workplace. First, to establish the level of relative gender parity in each country, the study calculated how many years a country has been governed by a woman since 1970, as well as the total number of women in governmental or parliamentary positions. It proceeded by examining the number of women in managerial positions, as well as data on female entrepreneurs in each country, to determine which nations help the most to foster the strongest female leadership opportunities and achievements.

Research then turned to the number of women in the typically male-dominated Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The study considered not only those actively studying, but also the percentage of women actually working in that field after graduation.

Average salary, gender wage gap access to education, legislation around women’s right to divorce or workplace discrimination, and the total days of maternity leave in each country were also weighed.

Overall, the Philippines ranked 41st out of 100 countries in terms of gender parity and female opportunities and achievements, leading the ASEAN region.

In terms of gender parity in workplaces, the Index showed the Philippines placing 37th in terms of women in management. However, based on salary level and wage gap, the country ranked 66th, which indicates a need for improvement in this area.

The infographic below shows the performance of economies in Southeast Asia where the Philippines leads the region. **(Rey Angelo Jose M. Gonzaga, BITS)**

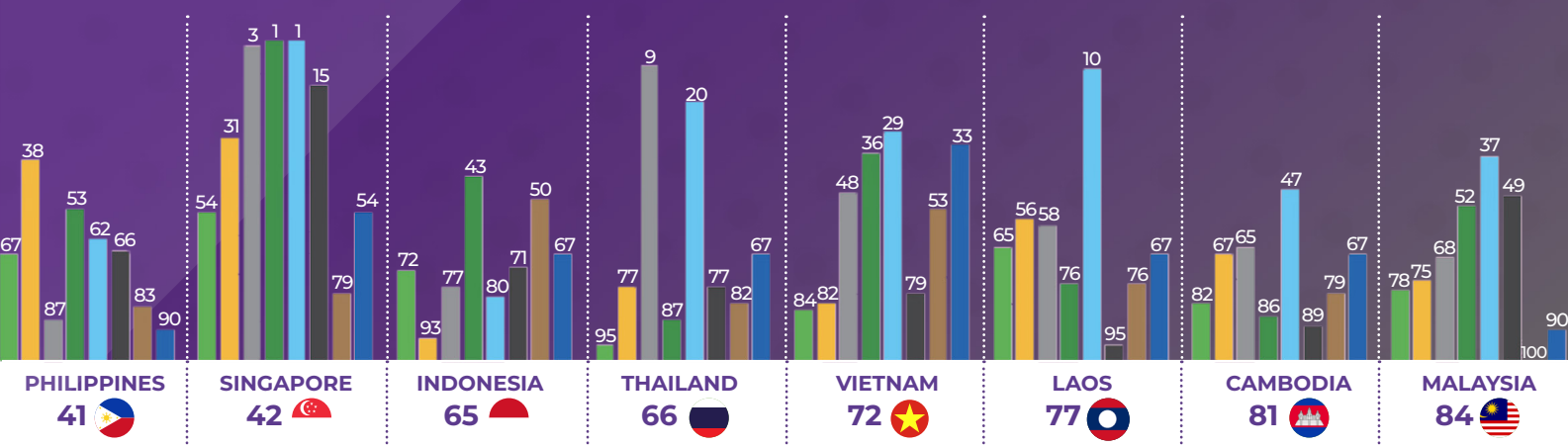
Women in STEM – female researchers as a percentage of total researchers; female shares of grades in Engineering, Manufacturing, and Construction programs; mean performance on the mathematics sale for female eight-grade students; female share of labor force.

Salary level and gender wage gap – the ration between estimated income of women and men; estimated female income

Female access to education – percentage of female enrollment in primary and secondary education, mean years of schooling.

Women’s legislation – divorce legality; women in power according to the Political Empowerment Score; presence of paternity leave; presence of legislation prohibition of workplace discrimination based on sex; percentages of wages paid in a covered period of maternity leave.

Maternity leave - The total number of days of paid parental leave available to mothers in a country.



Source: N26 Bank

LS NOOK

By: The Legal Service

Utilization of Legal Defense Fund

ISSUE:

Whether the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) may be used for appeals of government personnel to a Notice of Disallowance (ND) issued by the Commission on Audit (COA) or for filing a petition assailing its issuance before the Supreme Court (SC).

OPINION:

Special Provision No. 2, Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund of Republic Act (RA) No. 11518 or the FY 2021 General Appropriations Act provides that the LDF shall be used for actual expenses, including payment of premiums for posting of bail bonds and cash advance for expense of officials and employees of departments, bureaus, and offices, in relation to the defense of administrative, civil, or criminal cases filed against them in courts for acts committed in the performance of their actual functions.

This is reiterated under item 4.1 (c) of National Budget Circular No. 566 dated December 15, 2016¹, which prescribes that the case must be filed before courts

under the supervision of the SC for an employee to claim against the LDF. These include the Court of Appeals, Regional Trial Courts, Municipal Trial Courts, Municipal Circuit Trial Courts, and inferior courts, particularly the Metropolitan Trial Courts.

However, COA² is neither a court under the supervision of the SC nor a part of the Judiciary.³ On the other hand, COA is an independent constitutional commission exercising quasi-judicial power.

An administrative body exercises its quasi-judicial power when it performs an act of an executive or administrative nature in a judicial manner, where the power to act in such manner is incidental to or reasonably necessary to the performance of the executive or administrative duty entrusted to it.⁴

Moreover, it bears stressing that the issuance of an ND by the COA to an employee may not be considered as an administrative case given that the issuance of the same is to disallow upon audit, transactions deemed as irregular, unnecessary, excessive, extravagant, illegal, or unconscionable expenditures or uses of government funds and property.⁵

The LDF intends to promote the welfare of and extend assistance to government personnel concerning the defense of administrative, civil, or criminal cases filed against them in courts for acts committed in the performance of their actual functions.⁶

In fine, since COA is not a court, and NDs issued by COA do not partake of an administrative, civil, or criminal case filed in courts, expenses of government personnel for appeals or petition assailing these NDs are, therefore, not covered by the LDF.

¹ Guidelines in the Utilization of the Legal Defense Fund for FY 2016 and Succeeding Years

² Executive Order No. 292, Book V, Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 4, Section 24. Investigatory and Inquisitorial Powers.—The Chairman or any Commissioner, the Central Office Managers, the Regional Directors, the Auditors of any government agency, and any other official or employee of the Commission specially deputed in writing for the purpose by the Chairman shall, in compliance with the requirement of due process, have the power to summon the parties to a case brought before the Commission for resolution, issue subpoena and subpoena duces tecum, administer oaths, and otherwise take testimony in any investigation or inquiry on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Commission.

³ Lara, Grace Caudelyn B., et al, Fundamentals of Administrative Law, 2014 Ed., page 64

⁴ The Chairman and Executive Director, et al., vs. Ejercito Lim, 801 SCRA 304 (2017)

⁵ Orestes S. Miralles vs. Commission on Audit, 840 SCRA 108, (2017)

⁶ As provided under Item 1.0 of National Budget Circular No. 566 dated December 15, 2016

Continued from Page 6

we open ourselves to learning more about our work, the world around us, and ourselves. No matter how small, we all have a chance to contribute to the improvement and betterment of government and society.”

From former DBM secretaries she has worked with, Usec. Pascua has kept two reminders as wisdom to live by:

“We can only see a situation from the vantage point of where we are. But even at that level, we should contribute whatever we can, the best technical advice that we can. Others higher than us may have wider perspectives than we do, simply because of where they are. That, along with our contribution, will be the basis for their decision.”

“Talk to and work with the agencies. It is in this way that they will understand and get what we are aiming and trying to change. We should not be content with issuing out circulars and memoranda.”

She took these words to heart during her service in DBM, Usec Pascua shares, “and I have found that they work, and now I want to pass them on.”

As indeed, she has. Not just as a legacy as she leaves her DBM family to enjoy official retirement, but even in her active years, in the examples of her own approach to and performance at work.

Her former staff, Mia Andrea Soriano, who is now with the Fiscal Planning and Reforms Bureau, shares that Usec. Pascua always did her best to explain the whys behind the reforms we are pushing. “This made me feel like the work I was doing was always valuable and relevant. When asking for inputs and comments, she encouraged me to think about why it would be worth pursuing. These lessons helped me a lot in staying motivated in this job, even when things get tough and stressful.”

A mentor to many, Usec. Pascua is truly a lady extraordinaire, a public servant who does not only exude excellence and passion for work, but a leader who inspires those who work for, with, and around her to think, act, and be an enabler of positive change.

COMPENSATION COMPENDIUM



By: Organization, Position Classification and Compensation Bureau

Index of Occupational Services, Position Titles, and Salary Grades in the Local Government

In 2018, the DBM issued Budget Circular (BC) No. 2018-4¹ to provide the updated Index of Occupational Services, Occupational Groups, Classes, and Salary Grades (IOS) for the use of the different national government agencies.

As clarified under Item 3.0 of BC No. 2018-4, while the IOS CY 2018 Edition partly contains classes or position titles unique to local government units (LGUs), a separate updated IOS shall be issued for LGUs given the peculiarity of its position classification plan.

In view of this, Local Budget Circular No. 137² was issued on July 31, 2021 to provide the Index of Occupational Services, Position Titles, and Salary Grades in the Local Government (IOS-LGU), CY 2021 Edition as part of the efforts to update the Position Classification Scheme for LGUs.

The IOS-LGU is being updated pursuant to the mandate of the DBM as the administrator of the Compensation and Position Classification System, which was established under Republic Act No. 6758³ dated August 21, 1989, as amended, and Section 3 (b) of Congress Joint Resolution No. 4⁴ dated July 28, 2009, as well as the authority of the Department under Administrative Order No. 42, s. 1993⁵ to continue to prescribe policies, standards, and rules on

compensation and position classification in the local government.

The IOS-LGU CY 2021 Edition contains the updated list of classes or position titles existing in the LGUs grouped by occupation. In this regard, all positions in the LGUs shall be allocated to their proper position titles and salary grades in accordance with said Index. The updated IOS-LGU is divided into two (2) parts:

- *Part I covers all position titles applicable to municipalities, cities, and provinces; and*
- *Part II covers position titles applicable or which may be created in the barangays pursuant to LBC No. 63⁶ dated October 22, 1996.*

The issuance of the updated IOS-LGU is deemed timely to jumpstart the efforts of the LGUs in the preparation of a Devolution Transition Plan pursuant to Executive Order No. 138⁷, s. 2021, which will include an assessment of their respective organizational structure and staffing pattern.

Whenever necessary, modifications in the IOS-LGU will be issued by the DBM as developments occur in the nature and context of work and occupations in the government.

The Revised Index of Occupational Services, Position Titles, and Salary Grades in the Local Government under LBC No. 61 dated March 18, 1996 is deemed superseded with the issuance of the updated IOS-LGU under LBC No. 137.

¹ Index of Occupational Services, Occupational Groups, Classes and Salary Grades, CY 2018 Edition

² Index of Occupational Services, Position Titles and Salary Grades in the Local Government (IOS-LGU), CY 2021 Edition

³ Compensation and Position Classification Act of 1989

⁴ Joint Resolution Authorizing the President of the Philippines to Modify the Compensation and Position Classification System of Civilian Personnel and the Base Pay Schedule of Military and Uniformed Personnel in the Government, and for Other Purposes dated

⁵ Clarifying the Role of the Department of Budget and Management in the Classification and Compensation of Local Government Position Under R.A. No. 7160

⁶ Position Classification and Compensation of Barangay Officials and Personnel

⁷ Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Governments, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for Other Purposes



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