



The DBM Bulletin

The Official Newsletter of the Department of Budget and Management

2018 BUDGET

**A Budget that Reforms
and Transforms**



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Like Father, Like Daughter

Sec. Diokno and his daughter receive doctoral degree in same rite



The Secretary's Corner

The classic scene in commencement rites – at all levels and in all types of institutions of learning – is that of a graduate up front to receive the accolade and honor of the accomplishment, and of beaming parent/s at the side or watching from afar, expressing even greater joy and pride than the graduate.

That was not quite the scene that played out for one doctoral degree graduate during the University of the Philippines (UP) commencement ceremonies last June 25, 2017.

And yet, Dr. Charlotte Justine Diokno-Sicat could not have been prouder or more overjoyed, sharing the stage and the moment with her father, Dr. Benjamin E. Diokno.

The University conferred the highest academic rank and honor on DBM Secretary Diokno – a Doctor of Laws degree (*honoris causa*) – during the same occasion that Justine received her doctoral degree in Business Administration. The father was also the commencement speaker of her batch, the UP Class of 2017 in Diliman.

For Justine, it was a poignant event which she feels grateful and proud to have been privileged to experience – the very rare chance of earning a doctorate degree with her father.

“I devoted many years towards completing my doctorate degree, and I was thankful to have received it with my father, one of my strongest and most steadfast supporters, present. What was so surreal was the rare occasion that we both received academic degrees at the same graduation ceremony, and for this I am blessed,” shared Justine.

Some two months later, the Budget Secretary was awarded by the UP Alumni Association as one of its 2017 Most Distinguished Alumni, an award given to UP “alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary achievements and excellent contributions in their chosen fields that bring about substantial benefits to society and distinct honor to the University.”¹

Justine said the recognition shows an overwhelming and humbling appreciation of her father's dedication and contribution to public service.

“Dad has always felt the need to share what he knows with others, whether in the classroom, on television or radio, in print, social media, or academic journals. He always returns to UP, be it after studying abroad or holding various positions in government for different administrations in the past three decades,” shared Justine.

Secretary Diokno is a Professor Emeritus of the UP-Diliman, teaching courses in Public Sector Economics, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Development Economics, among others, for more than forty years. Known as a staunch UP alumnus, he earned his Bachelor's Degree in



Father and Daughter. Secretary Diokno receives an honorary Doctor of Laws degree (*honoris causa*) at the commencement rite of his daughter at the University of the Philippines on June 25, 2017.

Public Administration and Master's Degrees in Public Administration and Economics from the same university.

He also studied in the United States, obtaining his Master of Arts degree in Political Economy from the Johns Hopkins University in 1976 and a Ph.D. in Economics from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, in 1981.

Like her father, Justine was shaped and molded by a single alma mater, having earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics (1992) and Master's Degrees in Economics (1998) and Management (2016) from the same university.

Among the many other things they have in common, Justine shared what she considers is his greatest legacy to her, a fondness for teaching.

“I know my father's penchant and passion for teaching and I feel the same enthusiasm teaching at UP and sharing my research with others.”

Beyond the shared path of education, however, Justine does not see herself venturing into his other vocation of public service.

“I do not think I have the courage to be a public figure such as him and to expose myself, most especially to unfounded criticisms, while doing my job,” she said.

“I served at the DBM for almost three years from 1998 to 2001 and saw how steadfast Dad was in working and pushing for the reforms he wanted at the DBM amid criticisms and intrigues,” she recalled. “I can only hope to learn this kind of fortitude.”

Secretary Diokno is currently on his third tour of duty with the DBM, having earlier served as Undersecretary for Budget Operations from 1986 to 1991 and Department Secretary from 1998 to 2001.

The Secretary has been known for his policy reform contributions including, among others, providing technical assistance to the 1986 Tax Reform Program, helping design the 1991 Local Government Code of the Philippines, initiating a What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get policy to streamline the release of funds, and sponsoring the internationally lauded Government Procurement Reform Act.

But setting aside all these credentials and accolades, to Justine, he is a simple father who has always tried to instill in his children the values of education and hard work.

“Until now, he reminds me to ‘never rest on my laurels,’ strive to grow and learn continuously and waste no time. He is always supportive, whether in successes or in failures, and values family, making sure that he takes time out of his busy schedule for our regular get-togethers.”

Justine added, her Dad will always be the man who constantly reminds them of the true meaning of success.

“I learned from him that success is not served on a silver platter, that I need to strive and put in the hours and that perseverance and resilience to get me to where I want to go. Growing up, he tried to develop in me a discipline to learn things on my own, by not giving answers to me easily but training me to find the solution. More importantly, in this journey to continuously succeed through excellence, he inspires me to do so with integrity,” she said.
(*Emil John T. Manguerra*)

¹Department of Budget and Management (2017, August 11). *DBM Secretary is UP's Most Distinguished Alumnus of the Year*. Retrieved from http://www.dbm.gov.ph/?page_id=21513.

The Top Ten (from right to left)

1. Imee Hacla, DENR
2. Carmina Dela Cruz, DBM-CPMS
3. Johnry Castillo, DBM-BMB-C
4. Cheska Sebastian, DSWD
(not in photo)
5. Ruby Ann Manalo, DepEd
6. Sheena Joy Casuga, DBM-SPIB
7. Ianah Olonan, NEDA
8. Janet Macapagal, DBM-PMEB
9. Domingo Nievarez, Jr., DepEd
10. Cheril Magluyan, DBM-BMB-A



DBM Participants Among Top 10 Performers in M&E Course

Five participants from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) were among the top ten performers in the first batch of the Certificate Course on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results (CCMEfR), which was held from February 27 to June 28, 2017.

Recognized and honored among the topnotchers were Ms. Carmina Dela Cruz, Planning Officer V of the Corporate Planning and Management Service (2nd); Mr. Johnry Castillo, Supervising Budget and Management Specialist of the Budget and Management Bureau (BMB)-C (3rd); Ms. Sheena Joy Casuga, Budget and Management Specialist I of the Systems and Productivity Improvement Bureau (6th); Ms. Janet Macapagal, Budget and Management Specialist I, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Bureau (8th); and Ms. Cheryl Magluyan, Senior Budget and Management Specialist of BMB-A (10th).

The Certificate Course, which aimed at strengthening the capacity of government institutions to achieve their mandated goals and objectives and the planned results of their priority initiatives, was spearheaded by the DBM's Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Bureau (PMEB). It was conducted in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Asian Institute of Management, which developed and delivered the CCMEfR for the first batch. Participants in this first batch were from 10 departments, namely the Departments of Budget and Management, Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources, Education, Interior and Local Government, Transportation, Health, Public Works and Highways, Social Welfare and Development, and the National Economic and Development Authority.

The CCMEfR provided the participants with a solid foundation on the concepts and principles of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to effectively and efficiently fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities. It covered the following three (3) modules:

- **Module 1:** Public program implementation and results monitoring, focused on benchmarks/baselines, indicators and targets and M&E plans and practical tools;
- **Module 2:** Management of evaluations of development policies, programs and projects covering discussions on M&E designs, methods and reporting; and
- **Module 3:** Harnessing knowledge management and information systems for M&E use.

The Course consisted of classroom lectures and discussions, group activities, field work and individual research studies. Sit-in and online exams and written analysis of cases were given at the conclusion of each module to gauge the participant's understanding. Concepts and lessons were mostly taught through citations of actual learnings and practices drawn from selected case programs, policies and experiences of different private, public and non-profit entities in the Philippines and other countries from Asia, Africa, North and South America, among others.

Beyond the Classroom Lessons: Participants' Takeaway

"Through this Certificate Course, participants have come to view M&E not only as a mere activity to comply with the mandated requirements for funding by the DBM or accountability reporting by the Commission on Audit, but rather as a practice that offers a lot of potentials in improving how government operates," shared second placer Carmina Dela Cruz.

"While the UNICEF has emphasized M&E as a tool for tracking where the government and donor money goes, for us CCMEfR graduates, M&E has come to be a practical tool in facilitating decisions on where the money should – at the very beginning – be best allocated. At the agency level, particularly for those involved in the internal monitoring service, a sound and strong M&E practice would provide the evidence needed to support findings, whether negative or positive, on ongoing or new programs and initiatives, to facilitate sound management decisions and prioritization," she explained.

Ms. Edelita Ocampo of PMEB, a participant and the Course's Program Manager, noted the importance of

putting in place a good M&E system not just at the implementation phase of a project, but even from the conceptualization or planning phase.

"The M&E results framework of a government program or project should be defined and laid out from the very start. In particular, the parameters should be spelled out, indicating how the program or project should be measured, who should measure it, how often it should be measured, and who makes sure results reach the intended stakeholders," Ocampo stressed.

The Graduates

Through the strong leadership support of DBM Secretary Benjamin Diokno, and the good partnership between the DBM and UNICEF on establishing a results-based M&E and reporting system in the Philippine government, the four-month Course was able to produce 45 graduates from the 10 participating agencies.

These graduates, who are now equipped with a strong foundation on monitoring and evaluation, will be the new champions to foster results-based M&E in government. *(Joy Almazan, with inputs from Carmina Dela Cruz and Edelita Ocampo)*

The Graduates



Highlights of the 2018 Proposed Budget: A Budget that Reforms and Transforms

On the afternoon of July 24, 2017, President Rodrigo Duterte, the 16th President of the Philippines, delivered his second State of the Nation Address.

After his speech before a crowd of government officials, foreign dignitaries, and representatives from the various sectors of our society, the President said, “To the Senate and House of Representatives (HOR), the budget for the year 2018...is respectfully submitted.”¹

Thus began the budget legislation phase of the Administration’s financial blueprint on socioeconomic development for 2018 – the PhP3.767 trillion National Budget, equivalent to 21.6 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is the biggest budget so far, with an increase of 12.4 percent from the 2017 appropriation of PhP3.35 trillion.

Understanding the Budget’s ‘Spirit’

The first full budget crafted by the Administration responds to the pillars of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 – the Duterte Administration’s roadmap to socioeconomic progress.

With the PDP taking off from the government’s 0+10-Point Socioeconomic Agenda which ultimately aims to reduce poverty, the Administration commits to transform the lives of the Filipino people, especially the poor and the vulnerable.

For 2018, the Administration’s agenda of rolling out development efforts where they are needed most led to the formation of the budget theme aptly coined, “A Budget that Reforms and Transforms.”

This emphasizes the reformative and transformative direction the government is taking. And as underscored in the President Budget Message, the 2018 Budget hopes to “fulfill the longing of our people – not just for economic growth and progress, but for the actual, personal experience of these gains in terms of a better life for all Filipinos.”²

Key Projects of the Administration

Budget Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno highlighted that education and infrastructure development programs will get the lion’s share of the 2018 Budget. According to the Secretary, this is “consistent with President Duterte’s Build, Build, Build Program ... and his desire to develop the Filipino youth into an agile, competent workforce for the future.”³

With the full implementation of the K-to-12 Program next year, among others, education will get the biggest budget with PhP698.1 billion, broken down as follows: Department of Education (DepEd), PhP613.1 billion; State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), PhP64.6 billion; Commission on Higher Education (CHED), PhP13.5 billion; and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), PhP6.9 billion.

Of this, a budget of PhP126.0 billion is earmarked for the improvement of basic education facilities which include the construction of 47,000 classrooms and purchase of 84,781 sets of school seats. Scholarship grants will also be given to 550,696 tertiary students from a budget of PhP7.1 billion, and another PhP4.1 billion to cover graduate studies and development grants of faculties and staff as part of the K-to-12 Transition Program.

Likewise, cognizant of the importance of infrastructure in national development, the Administration is allotting PhP1,097.5 billion in 2018 to the sector, equivalent to 6.3 percent of GDP, to fund, among others, programs and projects for road transport, PhP431.1 billion; air transport, PhP10.1 billion; rail transport, PhP26.0 billion; and sea transport, PhP5.3 billion.

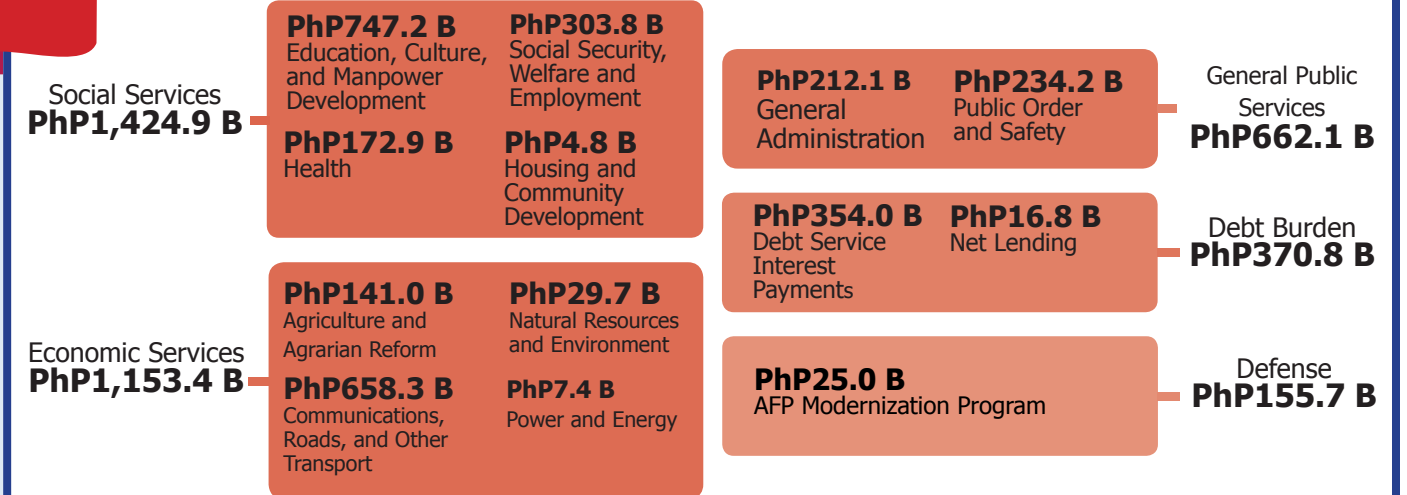
These include the PhP2.7 billion development of the Clark International Airport, the PhP3.6 billion Maritime Safety Capability Program, and the PhP4.9 billion Metro Manila Bus-Rapid Transit Lines 1 and 2. Said budgets form part of the PhP8.4 trillion infrastructure Program of the Administration from 2017 to 2022 – the largest infrastructure budget in any six-year period in the country.

Budget by Sector

One of the ways the government classifies the national budget is through the use of the traditional method which groups expenditures under five sectors, namely Social Services, Economic Services, General Public Services, Defense, and Debt Burden.

For 2018, the Social Services sector continues to get the largest share of the Budget to ensure the welfare of the people. With a PhP1,424.9 billion budget equivalent to 37.8 percent of the total, the Administration will continue to implement the PhP89.4 billion Conditional Cash Transfer Program, the construction of barangay health stations and improvement of hospital facilities with PhP29.0 billion, and the grant of social pension to indigent senior citizens with PhP19.3 billion.

With the implementation of budget reforms, the Duterte Administration looks forward to an effective and efficient government for the people, working towards a life that is *Mataatag*, *Maginhawa*, and *Panatag*.



Highlights of the Proposed Budget

1. By Sector, the Economic sector gets the biggest increase in budget allocation with 25.0 percent, from PhP922.9 billion in 2017 to PhP1,153.4 billion in 2018.
2. By Expense Class, Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses has the biggest share at PhP1,324.3 billion, or 35.2 percent to support the delivery of government services.
3. By Recipient, education, which includes the DepEd, SUCs, CHED, and TESDA, receives the biggest share at PhP698.1 billion, followed by the Department of Public Works and Highways with PhP643.3 billion.
4. Seventy-five percent or PhP2,840.5 billion of the PhP3.767 trillion proposed budget will be funded by revenues, inclusive of the expected yield from the Tax Reform Bill.
5. PhP888.2 billion of the proposed Budget will be sourced from borrowings, of which 80 percent will come from domestic sources to minimize exposure to fluctuations in foreign exchange rate.
6. As a portion of the Budget, the country’s debt burden has declined from 10.5 percent or PhP351.6 billion in FY 2017, to 9.8 percent or PhP370.8 billion in FY 2018. The smaller percentage share means more funds are available for the government to finance other programs and projects. (*Crispin Mabrian B. Abacan*)

¹Quismorio, E. (2017, July 25). Duterte submits proposed 2018 budget after lengthy SONA. Retrieved from <http://news.mb.com.ph/2017/07/25/duterte-submits-proposed-2018-budget-after-lengthy-sona/>

²Department of Budget and Management. (2018). The President’s Budget Message. Retrieved from http://www.dbm.gov.ph/?page_id=21191

³Reganit, C. (2017, July 14). Duterte to submit proposed 2018 budget on SONA day. Retrieved from <http://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1000834>

⁴Diokno, B. (2017, June 1). Financing the Philippine Golden Age of Infrastructure. Retrieved from http://www.dbm.gov.ph/?page_id=20431

Top 10 Recipients

1. Department of Education (including SUCs, CHED, TESDA) PhP698.1 B
2. Department of Public Works and Highways PhP643.3 B
3. Department of the Interior and Local Government PhP172.3 B
4. Department of Health (including budget of PHIC) PhP164.3 B
5. Department of National Defense PhP145.0
6. Department of Social Welfare and Deavolpment PhP138.0 B
7. Department of Transportation PhP73.8 B
8. Department of Agriculture PhP54.2 B
9. Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Regional Government) PhP33.5 B
10. Department of Environment and Natural Resources PhP27.9 B



Open Government up at the ASEAN

A “High Level Regional Conference on Open Government” was held at the Philippine International Convention Center last August 15, 2017 as a side event of the Philippines' current Chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Senior representatives from government and civil society organizations of the ASEAN and other selected countries discussed the best practices and latest Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiatives. ASEAN member-countries who are not yet part of the OGP were encouraged to join.

Philippine Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco Jr., who delivered the Keynote Address, underscored that OGP is “part of the Change Agenda of the Duterte administration.”

Following this, OGP Deputy CEO Joe Powell, Director Jeffrey Lehrer of the Office of Economic Development and Governance of USAID Philippines, and Deputy Minister Slamet Soedarsono of Indonesia's National Development and Planning Ministry expressed their respective messages of support.

Budget Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno, Chairperson of the Philippine-OGP Steering Committee, emphasized that “the Philippines' participation in the OGP clearly shows that the Duterte Administration is determined to deliver on our promise to listen to the people and serve them better.”

Budget Undersecretary Laura B. Pascua, Alternate Chairperson, led the discussion during the Regional Roundtable Discussion on Open Government, along



Undersecretary Laura B. Pascua leads the Regional Roundtable Discussion on Open Government.



Key resource persons and international participants of the High-Level Regional Conference on Open Government: A Side-Event of the Philippines Chairmanship of the ASEAN, pose for a group photo at the Philippine International Convention Center on August 15, 2017.

with Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) OIC Catalino Cuy and Indonesian Deputy Minister Slamet Soedarsono. They were joined by civil society participants from the ASEAN Region, namely, PH-OGP Steering Committee Co-Chair (CSO counterpart) Ms. Natalie Christine Jorge, Ms. Lia Toriana of Transparency International Indonesia, Ms. Nwe Win Zin from Myanmar, and Ms. Vien Nguyen from Vietnam.

OGP is a Washington DC-headquartered global organization that was established in 2011 through the partnership of eight countries that bid to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption and tap new technologies to enhance governance.

The Philippines is among the eight founding members of the OGP and is recognized as a regional champion, having been awarded for initiatives in citizen participation on budgeting and auditing. This year, the country again received an award for its Citizen Participatory Audit which was given a Special Mention Award from the Jury by the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency.



Image from Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency

At present, the Philippines and Indonesia are the two ASEAN members that are part of this global governance transparency initiative.

The Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) National Action Plan (NAP) 2017-2019 was also launched during the same event. The PH-OGP NAP is the fourth for the country. The OGP principles are embodied in the 12 commitments and initiatives, seven of which are new ones.

In summary, of the 12 commitments and initiatives, 10 promote the values of Open Governance on Access to Information, nine (9) address Public Accountability, eight (8) tackle Technology and Innovation, and 11 push for Civic Participation.

One of the innovations introduced in the current plan is the inclusion of sub-national commitments initiated by the Provinces of Albay, Bohol, and Surigao del Norte. This signifies the current Administration's thrust to bring Open Government down to the local levels.

(Haydee Parras-Toledo)

BTMS: Gaining Ground

Gaining significant momentum from the successful implementation of the initial phases of the Budget and Treasury Management System (BTMS), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has proceeded with Phase IV of the Project.

The BTMS is an integrated, accurate, reliable and secure financial information system that will support the public financial management (PFM) operations of the Philippine Government. Spearheaded by the DBM and the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr), the System aims to facilitate the collection and organization of government financial information into a central database in order to improve and strengthen crucial PFM functions.

Phase IV of the BTMS is the Budget Management Phase, which covers several PFM functions performed by the DBM's Budget and Management Bureaus, Budget Technical Bureau, Local Government and Regional Coordination Bureau, and the 16 Regional Offices (ROs). These functions include Appropriations Management, Allotments Management, Cash Allocation, and Fiscal Reporting.

The first three phases of the Project, implemented sequentially, were the following: Launching of the BTMS Portal to serve as the communication channel of the Project; Budget Execution, which tackled the functions of both the DBM and the BTr as spending agencies; and Treasury Management, which focused on the oversight functions of the BTr.

Faithful to its mandate as the oversight agency to promote sound, efficient and effective management and utilization of government resources, the DBM has introduced a number of significant enhancements to the BTMS Project over the past few months, and these have gained ground.

In May 2017, the Project was off to a good start with the identification of “Power Users”, or considered BTMS subject matter experts, from among the ranks of key officials of the DBM. This was implemented through an Office Order, which also directed the reconstitution of key DBM personnel as members of the Steering Committee and the Project Management Office (PMO). Additional Power Users from the ROs shall be identified soon through the issuance of a separate Office Order.

The “Power Users” are collectively known as the Functional Team, charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Ensure that the system will conform to the business processes as approved by the Steering Committee.
2. Assist and facilitate the roll out to departments and agencies.
3. Provide the strategic requirements for the BTMS, as an oversight agency.

While the Steering Committee shall act as the sponsor and main decision-making body of the Project, the Functional Team, in collaboration with the PMO, shall work closely with the BTMS Joint Venture Team as regards matters under Budget Management. The intention is for the Functional Team to conduct trainings on System functionalities on Budget Management, and to eventually provide mentorship to end-users.

June 8 marked the take-off of the Budget Management Phase prototype build presentation to the DBM officers. This phase covers the oversight function of the DBM, and the initial presentation, Build Demo I, featured the Vanilla Solution, which accounted for the basic functionalities of the BTMS.

The initial salvo uncovered areas where the suggestions of the PMO were incorporated, which then resulted in the main content of Build Demo II presented on August 10. This featured the uploading of the General Appropriations Act by Department or Agency. The method of classifying funds was also presented, as the system now came with the “For Comprehensive Release (FCR)” and “For Later Release (FLR).” The System also reflected the filtering of data through the Unified Accounts Code Structure. Finally, the issuance of the Special Allotment Release Order as a release form was also presented.

During the Build Demo III conducted on August 29, all customized forms and reports were presented, along with the issuance of the Notice of Cash Allocation, among other functions of the System.

In the next several weeks, the DBM and the Joint Venture Team will undertake the following activities: 1) Power Users' Training; 2) Addressing Issues of Power Users; 3) User Acceptance Testing (UAT); 4) Addressing UAT Issues; 5) Change Management Briefing; and 6) Functional End-Users Training.

(Mark Anthony M. Villa-Agustin, Communications Specialist and Change Management Consultant, Freebalance)



Power Users listen to the presentation during the Build Demo III held on August 29, 2017.



DBM Budget Reform Gaining Traction

A total of 39 select government agencies have taken part in the series of sessions conducted by the Department of Budget and Management to brief and update their key officers and personnel on the implications of the Budget Reform Program (BRP), particularly of the Budget Reform Bill (BRB), on government operations.

The consultation sessions, which were held over the months of July and August, also aimed to gather suggestions and gain support for the BRP and the proposed BRB, considered to be major strategies that will significantly advance the process of reengineering and streamlining budget procedures.

Addressing the forum participants in one of the assemblies, Budget Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno explained the need for major changes in the budgeting system to “improve the budget process as well as to enforce discipline in the implementation of the budget.”

The Budget Reform Program aims to reengineer the budgetary process towards the efficient, accountable and transparent use of public funds to ensure immediate and substantial public service delivery. At the heart of this Program is the institutionalization of budget reforms so far initiated by the Public Financial Management agencies (DBM, COA, DOF and BTr), through the Budget Reform Bill.

Among these reforms are the Treasury Single Account, the adoption of the Unified Accounts Code Structure, and the Budget and Treasury Management System (BTMS).

When enacted into law, the Budget Reform Bill will institutionalize the: 1) shift to one-year validity of appropriations from the current two-year validity; and 2) shift to cash-based appropriations from the current obligation-based appropriations.

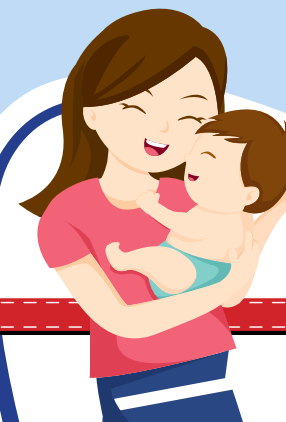
In preparation for these major shifts, seven (7) Budget Reform Program Task Teams were created to look into procedures that need to be enhanced, changes that have to be managed, and policies that have to be issued. Task team members consist of representatives from key agencies such as the DBM, DOF-BTr, COA, NEDA, DPWH, DSWD, DepEd, and DOH.

Another series of consultations will be conducted to brief the DBM Regional Offices on the Budget Reform Program and the BRB. (PFM-Project Management Office)

For more information on the Budget Reform Program and the Budget Reform Bill, contact the PFM Programme Management Office at 657-3300 loc 1209 / pmo@pfm.gov.ph



GAD CORNER



A Caring Space for Mothers and Children

When Patricia Anne Cainghog went back to work after her maternity leave to give birth more than a year ago, she was determined to continue to breastfeed her baby. That was possible, as she could express her milk at certain times during the day, and store it until she got home from the office. The problem was finding a comfortable place to do that.

That was a daily struggle she had to contend with at her old workplace, shared Cainghog, a newly hired executive assistant in the Office of Undersecretary Agnes Joyce Bailen.

“In my previous work, I would have to put a sign on the door of our office every time I express my milk because they do not have a breastfeeding station. Sometimes, I’d go to the clinic, but the only space available was a cubicle which is not secure from the entry of people.”

As a working mother with an infant at home, she is keenly aware of how a private space exclusive for lactation would be helpful to sustain breastfeeding her 1 year and 3-month-old daughter even while she is at work.

Cainghog is only one of the DBM employees who now enjoy the benefits of the newly constructed Lactation Room and Day Care Facility of the Department, which were launched on May 8, 2017, on the occasion of its 81st anniversary.

The Lactation Room, located on the second floor of Building III, is an accessible private area equipped with necessary equipment and facilities, including a couch, sanitary facilities, a refrigerator, an electronic breast pump, and a bottle sterilizer.

Adjoining the Lactation Room is the Child-Minding/Day Care Facility, which features a study and play area, complete with television and speaker, tables and chairs, beds, toys, and other instructional materials. Both rooms have an in-house teacher and a nurse to assist in operating the Facilities.

Ms. Regina Maria Niña M. Ruiz, the Day Care Teacher, explained that she uses a multi-sensorial approach in teaching the kids. Currently, she has 12 students, seven of whom are regular attendees.

“Lessons include basic foundations such as writing, tracing, and coloring and basic concepts like shapes and letters. Not more of a mastery, but we prepare them for the big school,” she said.

Lolita P. Matias, Chief of the Human Resource Development Division, underscored the importance of the Facilities. “The Lactation Room is intended to promote breastfeeding and provide mothers with the facilities they need, while the Day Care Facility is a way to put the minds of our employees at peace – that their children are safe while they are at work – especially those who have yet to afford nannies or those living independent from their relatives.”

This Gender and Development (GAD) project is supported by Republic Act (R.A.) No. 7600, as amended by R.A. No. 10028, otherwise known as “The Rooming-In and Breast Feeding Act of 1992” and R.A. No. 10410, otherwise known as the “Early Years Act of 2013.”

The Facilities are open to DBM employees from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(Emil John T. Manguerra)





Query¹ on Filling of Vacant Positions under a Reenacted Budget

ISSUE

Whether the Local Chief Executive (LCE) may hire personnel under a reenacted budget

DISCUSSION:

Mayor A of Municipality B intends to fill up six (6) vacant positions but is uncertain if this is allowed as the Municipality is operating under a reenacted budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. Since the Sangguniang Bayan has not yet passed the ordinance authorizing the proposed FY 2016 Budget, the Municipality, pursuant to Section 323 of Republic Act (RA) No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991, is using the appropriations under the FY 2015 authorized budget for its operations. It may be noted that per representation, subject vacant positions are those authorized and funded in the FY 2015 authorized budget of the Municipality.

It may be added that in a Memorandum of a Regional Office of the Department of Budget and Management, a Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Opinion No. 30, s. 2011 was cited as basis for stating that there should be no filling of positions under a reenacted budget.

Section 323 of RA No. 7160 authorizes the reenactment of the previous year's budget for all existing positions when the *Sanggunian* is unable to pass the budget for the year, to wit:

"However, only the annual appropriations for salaries and wages of existing positions, statutory and contractual obligations, and essential operating expenses authorized in the annual and supplemental budgets for the preceding year shall be deemed reenacted and disbursement of funds shall be in accordance therewith. xxx"

The use of the qualifier "existing" should be understood in its literal meaning in accordance with the plain meaning rule or verba legis,

that if a statute is clear, plain and free from ambiguity, it must be given its literal meaning and applied without interpretation. Thus, "existing" means those that are actually present or current as opposed to something new or to be created. Therefore, as used in Section 323 of RA No. 7160, when operating under a reenacted budget, only those positions that are already existing in the Municipality's Personnel Schedule or list of authorized budgeted positions with the corresponding appropriations in the previous year may be continued and filled up in case of vacancy.

As for the supposed DILG Opinion, the issue resolved therein is whether the twenty percent (20%) Development Fund is among those considered as reenacted and not on whether the LCE may fill up existing positions under a reenacted budget. In particular, the DILG opined that there can be no new projects under a reenacted budget, thus, the twenty percent (20%) Development Fund, covering new projects are not among the reenacted items. Moreover, the case of Cesar T. Villanueva, et al². vs. Mayor Felix V. Ople, et al. as cited in the DILG Opinion was used only in support of this argument. There is nothing in the DILG Opinion which says the LCE cannot fill up existing vacant positions under a reenacted budget.

In fine, the LCE may appoint personnel when operating under a reenacted budget as long as the position is existing and included in the Personnel Schedule and funded in the previous year's budget, subject to existing civil service laws, rules and regulations on qualifications and conditions for appointment.

¹Query lifted from Department of Budget and Management LS Opinion No. 11 dated March 22, 2016

²475 Supreme Court Reports Annotated (SCRA) 551 (2005)

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