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PRE-PLenary CONFERENCE ON THE FY 2019 BUDGET

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Pre-plenary conference on the proposed FY 2019 budget, plans and programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and its attached agencies	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), held a pre-plenary conference with the DSWD to thresh out issues and concerns raised by House Members relative to their proposed FY 2019 budget prior to the budget deliberations in the plenary.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Oscar "Richard" Garin Jr. (1st District, Iloilo), sat as the presiding officer during the pre-plenary conference with the DSWD.</p> <p>The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), National Council for Disability Affairs (NCDA), and the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) presented their proposed budget for FY 2019 which is P68.45 million, P54.49 million and P90.57 million, respectively.</p> <p>Rep. Garin asked why the CWC's budget for maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) decreased. CWC Policy and Planning Division head Ma. Consolacion Salcedo explained that a pilot project on mental health and psychosocial support intervention for the children in Marawi City will not be implemented yet upon the advice of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The DBM requested the CWC to consult first with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the National Youth Commission (NYC) for the purpose of streamlining projects related to the Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan (CRRP) for Marawi.</p> <p>DSWD Undersecretary Luzviminda Ilagan added that the Task Force Bangon Marawi is mandated to incorporate all plans and programs of government agencies pertaining to the rehabilitation of Marawi and administer all the funds intended for this program.</p> <p>Rep. Arlene Brosas (Party-List, GABRIELA) inquired on the 97% decrease in JJWC's capital outlay (CO). JJWC Executive Director Tricia Clare Oco explained that the CO was reduced because of the non-allotment of funds for the construction of the Bahay Pag-Asa for 2019. The JJWC and the local government units (LGUs) are still in the process of consolidating information with regard to the construction and rehabilitation of several Bahay Pag-Asa structures.</p> <p>On the issue raised by Reps. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) and Marilyn Primicias-Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan) concerning the tedious process that senior citizens need to undergo in order to avail themselves of the social pension program, Ilagan said that the Department is</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>		<p>already coordinating with the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to come up with a better scheme that will help facilitate the release of pension funds.</p> <p>Rep. Brosas asked if DSWD's poverty alleviation program will continue as a long-term intervention, Ilagan said that surveys and assessments are being conducted to determine if the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services - National Community Driven Development Program (KALAH! CIDSS-NCDDP) should be continued or not.</p> <p>Several House Members requested a list of beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) per district. In response, DSWD Assistant Secretary Carlo Florendo Castro claimed that clearance from the National Privacy Commission (NPC) is required before the Department can disclose such information.</p> <p>The Committee sought the DSWD's reaction on the issue of unliquidated funds due to unclaimed cash grants under 4Ps, as reflected in a 2017 Audit Observation Memorandum (AOM) issued by the Commission on Audit (COA). Ilagan explained that the accumulation of unclaimed cash grants was due to: beneficiaries opting not to withdraw the entirety of the cash grant; cash cards becoming idle when beneficiaries transfer residences without notice and when cash cards are lost or stolen; and when grantees of cash cards are already deceased. Nonetheless, the funds for the idle accounts are not reverted back to the National Treasury unless such accounts have been inactive for two years, Ilagan said.</p> <p>The DSWD was requested to submit reports and documents pertinent to its proposed 2019 budget before the plenary deliberation on its budget.</p>
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