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DTI pushes for PWD economic empowerment



(Upper left photo) Assistant Secretary for Special Concerns and Persons with Disability (PWD) Focal Person Ameenah A. Fajardo noted in her inspirational message that alongside the challenges that the pandemic bring is the opportunity to persevere. (Upper right photo) Department of Trade and Industry Resource Generation Management Service (DTI-RGMS) Director Lydia R. Guevarra cited the Persons with Disability (PWD)-related initiatives and accomplishments of the Department aligned with the Disability Inclusive Governance Framework included in the Manual on Disability Inclusive Governance or ManDIG.

The Department of Trade and Industry Resource Generation Management Service (DTI-RGMS) led the Department in celebrating the 43rd National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NPDR) Week with the theme “*Kalusugan at Kaunlaran ng Pilipinong May Kapansan, Isulong sa Gitna ng Pandemya*”, during the virtual flag raising ceremony held on 19 July 2021, Monday.

In her inspirational message, **Assistant Secretary for Special Concerns and Persons with Disability (PWD) Focal Person Ameenah A. Fajardo**, expressed her gratitude toward the 53 Persons with Disability (PWD) focal persons across the regions who have, in the past years, showed their hard work and dedication in ensuring that the Department provides the best assistance to the much vulnerable stakeholders.

Moreover, **Director Lydia R. Guevarra**, in her opening message, further emphasized that DTI continues to remain adept on the economic challenges and needs of the PWD community which includes access to livelihood and employment, as mandated by the Department's Manual on Disability and Inclusive Governance (ManDIG). She also cited some of the Department's initiatives to support this cause.

Among the activities to strengthen the capacities of DTI to respond to the economic empowerment of PWDs is the conduct of various Disability Sensitivity Trainings for the PWD focal persons from the Regional and Provincial offices, as well as the Head Office Bureaus and even the Attached Agencies.

There was a developed PWD Database referred to as the Persons with Disabilities Management Information System (PIMS), which is a fully automated database that records the information of the DTI-assisted PWDs. The PIMS is one of the outputs of the DTI Inter-Bureau Disability Technical Working Group (TWG), created pursuant to Department Order No. 20-29 and chaired by RGMS. PIMS, developed with the support of the Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (BSMED), Human Resource and Administrative Service (HRAS), Information Systems Management Service (ISMS), and the Knowledge Management and Information Service (KMIS), has already been rolled out for use by PWD focals in the Central Office and Regional as well as Provincial Offices.

Dir. Guevarra also noted that the Department has helped and assisted more than 28,000 PWDs nationwide, some are engaged in their own micro, small, or medium enterprises that have availed different development programs.

From participating in online trade fairs and various training and seminars, to receiving assistance through the *Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (NSB)*, *Pangkabuhayan para sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG)*, and the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises or BMBE, the Department has helped more than 4,000 PWD MSMEs since the pandemic started in 2020 until July 2021. This is 15% of the total PWD MSMEs assisted from years 2015-2019. An online trade fair, BizAbility, was also mounted by RGMS in coordination with the Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion, KMIS, and the Regional Offices.

During the flag raising program, an audio-visual presentation that showed the salient points of the DTI ManDIG was also shown, which emphasizes the disability inclusion in governance, particularly in Institutional Capacity Building, Communication and Advocacy, and Programs and Services. The AVP, a project of the RGMS developed in collaboration with KMIS, will be made available for showing in DTI offices, related events, and in all *Negosyo Centers*.

Also featured in the video were testimonials from notable PWD entrepreneurs who received assistance from the Department.

The DTI supports the conduct of the NPDR week, held annually, as prescribed in Proclamation No. 361, series 2000. Several activities were organized as part of the celebration, such as the hanging of the NDPR streamer, recital of the Pledge of Loyalty on the Rights and Privileges of PWDs, webinar on economic recovery programs and entrepreneurship trainings for PWDs, and the Local Government Units Convention on Disability Inclusive Governance.