

Group 2

SAMBONG

MANDALUYONG CITY---For fifty three year old once timid laundrywoman mother of eight children Carolina Versoza, 4Ps doesn't only stand for Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, it also means "Pagkakataon, Pagsisikap, Pag-asa, at Pagbabago".



Aling Carolina's family is one of the 4.1 million beneficiaries of the national government's forefront poverty alleviation program. Before 4Ps, Aling Carolina recalls the time when she and her husband could not make both ends meet with their meagre income. Her husband gets occasional projects as a carpenter while she does laundry works. She often finds herself bordering on hopelessness seeing her children battle hunger. She also feels uncertain about their future.

But upon inclusion in the program, she and her husband and their eight children, the eldest of them Daisy, 28 and the youngest, Cassandra, 15 regularly wore smiles on their faces every time they received their 4Ps cash grant of P4,800, as this gives them relief from the burden of worrying on where to get the daily allowance of the children.

The mere thought of a secured future for her them through education with the aid of 4Ps already brings dignity to their family and leaves her and her husband with a positive outlook in life.

“Dati walang sobrang pera, hindi mo mailabas ang mga bata, pero dahil sa 4Ps, basta araw na ng pindot, ayan na, yan na ang bonding time namin ng mga anak ko, kumakain kami sa labas, pero konti lang din ang nagagamit namin na pera kasi budgeted na na iyon at may pambawi naman kami mula sa ibang kita,” Verzosa told the group.

Addressing the food security, DSWD-initiated Gulayan sa Barangay project gives Aling Carolina an additional income of P600-P1,000 a week from her harvest of eggplant, alugbati, saluyot, camote tops, sambong, among others.

The Gulayan sa Barangay at Barangay Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City is one of the 761, 424 community and school-based Backyard Gardening in the country that promotes food production at the household and community level to ensure provision and access to fresh, organically produced and nutritionally rich food to the Pantawid Pamilya members, especially children towards nutrient sufficiency and food security.

Teresita Illas, Mandaluyong City social welfare and development officer said the project helps uplift the living condition of the 4Ps beneficiaries.

“Hindi nahuhuli ang mga 4P’s natin dito sa Mandaluyong sa pag-angat ng antas ng kanilang buhay at masaya naming ginagawa ang aming tungkulin para tuloy tuloy na magawa ito,” she told the group.

4Ps has also paved the way for an employment opportunity for Aling Carolina’s daughter at the Finance Unit of DSWD NCR, thus helping augment the family income.

Her three next elder children—Darwin, Carlito and Daniel are similarly not 4Ps beneficiaries but they work as a carpenter and fast food crews thus also earn and help meet the family’s financial needs.

For Aling Carolina, she has been compliant to the conditionalities set forth in the 4Ps not only because of the cash grant at stake but also that it has transformed her total well being. The monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS) served as a learning tool that improved her knowledge and skills. Health and nutrition of her children had also been taken cared of.

In 2015, despite the fateful ordeal she and her family suffered from the death of her husband, Aling Carolina was chosen by her cluster to be a Parent Leader, aiding in the implementation of the program in the grassroots encouraging the 52 families to actively comply with the conditionalities of the program.

Leading her cluster has greatly developed her leadership skills as well as her confidence in what she can do.

Furthermore, Aling Carolina believes that the program should be fully supported and was ecstatic when she learned that 4Ps is now a law, “marami pa po kasing pamilyang nangangailangan ng tulong,” she added.

“Dati po noong walang 4Ps, kulang ang financial, pero dahil dito ilang taon nang mayroong tulong sa pag-aaral ng mga anak ko, ako naman nakakakuha ng kaalaman sa training sa FDS, na-adopt ko ang tinuturo

sa seminar, marami ako nakakahalobilo, marami ako natutunan sa buhay at nagkaroon kami ng pag-asa at ng pagbabago sa pag unlad ng aming buhay”.

David, her fifth child benefited from 4Ps as a senior high school student but was not able to go to college when the family experienced a turmoil following the said death of her husband in 2015 because she was all left alone to raise them.

But, with the positive outlook in life she has developed from being a regular attendee of the learning and skills program of the 4Ps, she is now highly convinced and determined that with the support of her five working children, they can send youngest children Charles, Catherine and Cassandra to college and achieve their dreams of earning degrees in criminology, tourism and education respectively.

“Marami naman maaaplyan ng scholarship, andiyan din ang mga kuya at ate nila na tutulong sa kanila, nagtapos na sila ng senior high, itutuloy tuloy na namin yan, pagtutulungan namin,” she said.

She claims that this daunting task was made easier with the support of 4Ps which has the ultimate goal of breaking the intergeneration cycle of poverty in the Philippines.

Aling Carolina’s story is a story of Pagkakataon—opportunity to have a better way of life; Pagsisikap—nurturing what has been entrusted to her; Pag-asa, hope for a bright future for her children; and Pagbabago—a new and empowered perspective in continuing their life beyond the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program.

4P beneficiary Carolina Verzosa is proud of her sambong plant in the Gulayan sa Barangay program of 4Ps in Sanctuary, Addition Hills in Mandaluyong City. Photo by Chatty Decena