

Comments on Legislative Measures on the Community Based Monitoring System

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This document provides comments on two legislative measures concerning the implementation of Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS), namely House Resolutions No. 3 and 70. Both resolutions emphasize the critical need for timely and accurate implementation of the CBMS to support the government's social protection programs.

Overview of the Resolutions

1. House Resolution No. 3³

Introduced by 4Ps Partylist Representatives JC M. Abalos and Marcelino C. Libanan, House Resolution No. 3 urges the Committee on Poverty Alleviation to conduct an inquiry on the status of CBMS implementation in aid of legislation. The resolution emphasizes the importance of timely and reliable data, particularly as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) anticipates the exit of 422,449 household beneficiaries from the 4Ps program in 2025. This development highlights the need for updated socioeconomic data to guide the identification and inclusion of new eligible households. The resolution also recognizes that CBMS data will serve as the foundation for multiple social protection programs beyond 4Ps, including disaster response initiatives, making its timely implementation critical for maintaining program continuity and effectiveness.

2. House Resolution No. 70⁴

Filed by Representative Bernadette Escudero, House Resolution No. 70 directs an inquiry into the status of CBMS implementation with emphasis on strengthening data-driven social protection and poverty alleviation programs. The resolution underscores that the CBMS was designed to address long-standing data gaps in targeting systems used by government agencies prior to the law's enactment, providing timely, granular, and community-specific information on poverty, demographics, employment, health, education, housing, and basic services. The resolution also calls for ensuring the integration of CBMS data across relevant government agencies to maximize its utility in evidence-based policymaking.

Comments and Recommendations on the CBMS implementation

We recognize and support Congress's initiative to exercise oversight and monitor the implementation of the CBMS through these resolutions. The CBMS is envisioned to serve as a vital component of the country's social protection data infrastructure, supporting evidence-based policymaking and program

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³ House of Representatives. (2025). House Resolution No. 3: Resolution Urging the Committee on Poverty Alleviation to Conduct an Inquiry on the Status of CBMS Implementation.

⁴ House of Representatives. (2025). House Resolution No. 70: Resolution Directing an Inquiry on the Status of Implementation of the CBMS Act.

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targeting. Legislative review at this stage is both timely and appropriate, given the forthcoming exit of a substantial number of 4Ps beneficiaries⁵ and the need to ensure that the CBMS can adequately support this process.

In this context, we offer several insights and recommendations to further strengthen CBMS implementation. These include setting clear implementation timelines with corresponding accountability mechanisms; ensuring data quality through systematic validation processes; and, enhancing coordination among key implementing agencies to promote coherent governance and integration of CBMS with existing social protection information systems. We also briefly discuss PIDS's role in CBMS implementation, especially in relation to its mandate to conduct periodic assessments of the 4Ps program.

1. Importance of Data Timeliness

Given its envisioned role, the timeliness and accuracy of CBMS data are essential to effective social protection delivery. Because poverty conditions can change rapidly due to economic shocks, climate-related disasters, or health emergencies, regular data updates are necessary to ensure that targeting remains responsive and accurate.

Evidence from the recent PIDS study by Albert et al. (2024)⁶ on the veracity of the 4Ps beneficiary list highlights the importance of maintaining timely and reliable data. The study shows that while static demographic information such as household addresses remains highly consistent at 90 to 94 percent, dynamic information relevant to welfare assessment tends to change over time. For example, compared with Listahanan data, employment status records show only 67.4 percent consistency, while educational attainment aligns in 73.1 percent of cases with the data collected by the study team. These differences in data reflect demographic and socioeconomic transitions, including migration, changes in household composition, and shifts in employment patterns among members.

The country's experience during Typhoon Haiyan and the COVID-19 pandemic further underscores the need for regularly updated and adaptable data systems. During the pandemic, the distribution of the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) demonstrated how a reliable and centralized registry of beneficiaries is critical for delivering assistance efficiently and equitably⁷. A flexible CBMS that allows both periodic updates and rapid data collection in times of crisis will be vital for improving responsiveness in future social protection interventions.

To achieve this, the government should adopt a clear, time-bound CBMS implementation plan with defined milestones and accountability measures to ensure completion before the scheduled graduation of 4Ps beneficiaries. Priority should be given to areas with high expected graduation rates to support transition planning. Performance-based incentives may also be introduced for LGUs that meet data collection targets, along with proportionate sanctions for non-compliance. Finally, clear procedures should be established for addressing implementation bottlenecks, including criteria for when national government intervention is warranted in cases of local implementation delays or failures.

2. Data Accuracy and Security

Evidence from impact evaluations of social protection programs consistently shows that the accuracy of targeting and beneficiary data directly affects program outcomes⁸. Programs with better

⁵ House of Representatives. (2025). House Resolution No. 3: Resolution Urging the Committee on Poverty Alleviation to Conduct an Inquiry on the Status of CBMS Implementation.

⁶ Albert, J.R.G., et al. (2024). Assessment of the Veracity of the List of 4Ps Beneficiaries. Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper.

⁷ Melad, K., N. Araos, and A. Orbeta. (2020). Giving Cash to the Poor: A Study of Pantawid Pamilya Cash Grants Generosity, Frequency, and Modality. Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper.

⁸ Fiszbein, A., & Schady, N. (2009). Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty. World Bank Policy Research Report. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

targeting accuracy achieve more substantial impacts on poverty reduction, school enrollment, and health outcomes. Ensuring high-quality CBMS data is therefore essential to sustain these gains and to improve the precision and credibility of targeting across programs.

Maintaining data quality requires that the CBMS effectively capture both static information, such as location and household composition, and dynamic information, such as income, employment, and health status. Regular updating and validation of these data are crucial to reflect changes in household conditions over time. Technology-enabled data collection tools with built-in validation rules can minimize encoding errors, allow real-time consistency checks, and improve the overall reliability of collected information.

Community-based validation mechanisms, such as participatory review sessions with barangay officials and civil society representatives, can also be explored to further enhance accuracy by leveraging local knowledge to validate collected data. These efforts should be complemented by a robust grievance and redress system that allows households to correct inaccuracies in their information. Building on the existing Grievance Redress System (GRS) of the 4Ps could provide an effective starting point⁹.

Finally, sustained data quality depends on continuous capacity building for local government units (LGUs) and field implementers. Standardized training, refresher courses, and learning opportunities can ensure consistency in data collection practices and strengthen local capacity to use CBMS data for evidence-based planning and decision-making.

3. Institutional Coordination and Governance

The effective implementation of the CBMS relies on close coordination among key stakeholders, including the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) as the lead implementing agency, LGUs as primary data collectors, the DSWD as the main user for social protection programs, and other agencies that will utilize CBMS data. While the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the CBMS law¹⁰ provide the institutional framework for coordination, it is equally important to assess how data sharing and integration mechanisms among users operate in practice.

Strengthening data sharing and interoperability across government agencies is essential to maximize the utility of CBMS data. Formal data sharing agreements should define clear parameters for data access, permissible use, and accountability, consistent with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Integration of CBMS with existing social protection information systems, such as those managed by DSWD, the Department of Labor and Employment, and the Department of Agriculture, would enable more efficient beneficiary identification, reduce duplication, and improve program targeting.

Role of PIDS in CBMS Implementation

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) can contribute to advancing the effectiveness of the CBMS through its mandate to conduct policy research and provide evidence-based recommendations. Under Republic Act No. 11310, which institutionalized the 4Ps, PIDS is mandated to conduct periodic impact assessments of the 4Ps program and to verify the accuracy of the list of beneficiaries. This responsibility is closely linked to the 4Ps targeting system, which will now rely on CBMS data. Fulfilling this mandate requires timely and reliable access to CBMS data to enable rigorous evaluation of the 4Ps, ensure the accuracy of beneficiary information, and help confirm that social protection interventions reach intended households. As the government transitions from Listahanan to CBMS as the primary targeting system, ensuring that PIDS has access to CBMS data is essential for maintaining objective program assessment and supporting continuous improvement in social protection delivery.

⁹ See Melad, K. 2024. From Complaints to Opportunities: Analyzing Grievance Trends and Responsiveness in the 4Ps. Research Paper Series 2024-08. Quezon City, Philippines: Philippine Institute for Development Studies.

¹⁰ Republic Act No. 11315. (2019). An Act Institutionalizing the Community-Based Monitoring System.

Conclusion

The legislative measures under review emphasize the importance of generating timely and reliable data through the CBMS to strengthen the country's social protection delivery. The impending graduation of more than 400,000 4Ps beneficiaries in 2025 highlights the urgent need for updated socioeconomic data to inform transition planning and expand support for other vulnerable households. Evidence from recent PIDS studies underscores the value of regularly updated information systems in capturing changing household conditions and improving the accuracy of beneficiary targeting. The recommendations in this document seek to contribute to the development of a more responsive and data-driven CBMS that supports effective and inclusive social protection.