



How #QuarantineLife Turned Favorable to Gender Equality



There's always a bright side in everything. Like in this time of home quarantine being imposed amid the enhanced community lockdown in Luzon from March 16 to April 13, 2020 to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

People are going back to the basics, that is, being at home with families and appreciating the value of life, health, and togetherness. The #QuarantineLife has also given us time to do things that we have been putting off like doing general cleaning at home and enjoying meals with the whole family in the dining table.

Who would have thought that 2020 National Women's Month Celebration (NWMC) would be marred by the Covid-19 crisis? Lineup activities of various government and non-government organizations had to be postponed to avoid mass gathering and observe social distancing.

But again, there's a rainbow amid this rain. Like the re-strengthening of the bonds of families, especially couples who are now able to help one another with chores at home.

Before the quarantine situation, the prevalent condition was that women are left to do most, if not all, of the household chores.

The Oxfam Philippines has been stressing the need to recognize the value of 'unpaid care work' in achieving gender equality and overcoming poverty. Their campaign "I Laba Yu" encourages husbands and wives to share household chores and responsibilities.

Unpaid care work, Oxfam says, refers to all unpaid services provided within a household for its members, including household chores, care of persons, and voluntary community work.

Oxfam points out that this impedes women from pursuing opportunities in education, employment, political engagement, and leisure activities. It may also negatively impact on their health and well-being.

Age of enlightened men

Fortunately, more and more Filipino men nowadays are becoming more gender sensitive just like Eulalio Sabroso of the DILG Public Affairs and Communication Service who has been married to his wife for 27 years.

He does not consider his manhood lessened by helping his wife do the laundry, ironing, cleaning, and cooking. He helped take care of his four children and is now helping raise his three grandchildren.

Kuya Budo, as he is fondly called by his colleagues, is also a skilled electrician, welder, mechanic, and repairman. He agrees that housewives and mothers should be remunerated, so he urged his three children to contribute to the household expenses.

"Kung kasambahay nga may suweldo, lalo na dapat ang mga nanay," he said. Despite all his works at their home, Sabroso always arrives first in the PACS office to clip news reports concerning the DILG.

Another enlightened Filipino male is Epifanio Panogan, 44, a lobby guard on the 18th floor of the DILG-Napolcom Center. He shows his appreciation of his wife's love and care by giving his wife his whole salary. "Siya ang pinahahawak ko ng pera at tumutulog ako sa paglalaba at pagluluto," he said.

As for Ramel Rosalia of the DILG Internal Audit Service, he regularly sends part of his salary to his wife who lives in Pangasinan with their baby while he takes care of their eldest child here in the Metro.

"It's hard to be supporting two households that's why I'm looking for a house to rent here in Metro Manila so that my whole family can be together," Ramel said.

Hearing these from them makes one wish that #SanaAll men are compassionate in being true partners with their spouses and see their partners as their equals.

One can only hope that after this #QuarantineLife, couples would continue to be helping hands to each other in supporting their families. May that re-tightened bond never be loosened again. ■ Edgardo Tugade

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We, the DILG-Central Office, imbued with the core values of Integrity, Commitment, Teamwork and Responsiveness, commit to formulate sound policies on strengthening local government capacities, performing oversight function over LGUs, and providing rewards and incentives. We pledge to provide effective technical and administrative services to promote excellence in local governance and enhance the service delivery of our Regional and Field Offices for the LGUs to become transparent, resilient, socially-protective and competitive, where people in the community live happily.

We commit to continually improve the effectiveness of our Quality Management System compliant with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and international standards gearing towards organizational efficiency in pursuing our mandate and achieving our client's satisfaction.

We commit to consistently demonstrate a "Matino, Mahusay at Maasahang Kagawaran Para sa Mapagkalinga at Maunlad na Pamahalaang Lokal".