

GOOD PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION

“Nang Dahil sa Kahon”

The Innovations of DSWD's Regional Resource Operations Section



BACKGROUND:

Aside from the Red Vest, another object that people readily identify with DSWD is its Family Food Packs (FFPs). During emergency situations such as disasters, the FFPs become a common sight to affected families, who often depend on these boxes for their survival, as these boxes contain enough food to feed a family of five for two to three days.

As the chair of the Food and Non-Food Item (FNFI) Cluster of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), DSWD is responsible for the production, storage and the distribution of these FFPs. And true to its commitment, DSWD has indeed produced and distributed these relief items where they are needed – from the Yolanda-ravaged communities in 2012, to the highlands of San Jose de Buan in 2019 and even to the locked-down municipality of Burauen during the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, the humble, yet essential FFP has made an appearance.

And where do these FFPs come from? How are they produced?



Inside DSWD's brand new warehouse in Pawing, Palo

Enter DSWD's Regional Resource Operations Section (RROS) under the Disaster Response Management Division (DRMD).

Based on DSWD's Administrative Order 01, Series of 2018, the RROS' responsibility is to ensure the availability, accessibility and readiness of resources, food and non-food items, and the administration of necessary support before and during disaster operations. The RROS is further subdivided into the Warehousing and the Donations Unit. (https://www.dswd.gov.ph/issuances/AOs/AO_2018-001.pdf)

This Best practices Document will examine the various innovations that the RROS has implemented over the years.

PRE IMPLEMENTATION:

Prior to these innovations, the production of FFPs was less streamlined. All raw materials (canned goods, rice, coffee, etc.) would be placed on low tables. The volunteer repackers and DSWD staff would then gather around the tables and repack these raw materials into FFP plastic bags marked with the DSWD logo.

After repacking the food items into FFPs, these plastic bags would then be placed inside sacks and then stacked on top of pallets and on top of each other. Each sack was then marked with the Production Date and the Expiration Date. The Expiration date was based on the food item with the nearest expiration date. Using this information, it became easier to plan which sacks should first be distributed.



left, volunteers and repackers finish repacking the food items into FFP plastic bags
 top right, volunteers and repackers gather around a table to repack raw materials into FFPs
 bottom right, FFP sack marked with PD (Production Date) and EX (Expiration)
 below, FFP sacks in storage. The FFP sacks are stacked on pallets and then stacked on top of each other



IMPLEMENTATION:

RROS' evolution did not happen overnight. Rather it was gradual, with improvements being implemented in stages. However, it is certain that all of the RROS' improvements started with a simple box, and that all of these improvements were made without spending a single peso.

Stage 1: Transition from Plastic Bags to Boxes (2017)

During 2017, DSWD FO VIII staff headed by RROS OIC Orville "Billy" Berino left Tacloban to provide augmentation to the ongoing relief efforts conducted by DSWD FO X. This was in response to the Marawi Siege, a five-month long conflict between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and several terrorist groups, including ISIS and the Maute group.

At the conclusion of their augmentation, Mr. Berino noticed several unused DSWD boxes in the FO X warehouse. Seeing an opportunity to improve the packaging of the FFPs, he asked permission from DSWD FO X Regional Director Nestor B. Ramos to acquire the boxes.

And so, the augmentation team returned from Marawi with truckloads of boxes. Since then, DSWD FO VIII has packaged the FFPs in these boxes.



What's in the box? DSWD FFPs usually contains six kilos of rice, assorted canned goods, six sachets of coffee, and cereal drink

Stage 2: Installation of Racking System (2018)

Having improved the packaging of the FFPs from plastic bags to boxes, another opportunity presented itself for the improvement of the RROS. By mid-2018, DSWD was able to procure a racking system, which was acquired when the local branch of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) shut down its office.

With the installation of this racking system, it became easier for RROS to organize all the relief items as well as save on space. Instead of stacking all the FFPs and raw materials on the ground, it became possible to stack them vertically, thus clearing floor space. And with this extra space, it became possible for RROS to store more FFPs and raw materials.



Before the installation of the racking system, all goods were stacked on the floor. Due to this system, the storage area was often crowded, with limited space available for DSWD staff to walk in for the inspection of goods. In contrast, when the racking system was installed, organization of goods became easier. More space also became available, since the goods were stored vertically.



Stage 3: Assembly Line Method and Rollers (2018-2019)

Although the packaging and the storage of the FFPs had already been improved, FFP production remained largely unchanged. The raw materials were placed on tables, and the volunteers and repackers would have to repack each item into the FFP boxes.

Taking inspiration from the National Resource Operations Center (NROC) in the National Capital Region and the Visayas Disaster Resource Center (VDRC) in Cebu, RROS implemented an assembly line method to make FFP production more efficient.

Using this method, the repackers would stand alongside the table, and the FFPs would be pushed from one end of the table to the other, making small stops along the way. The repackers then put in relief items as the FFPs stop in front of them. Each repacker put in a specific food item inside the box. One was assigned to put in rice, the other was assigned to put in canned goods, and another would put in coffee. Eventually, once the FFPs reach the other end of the table, it would be sealed by another staff whose main function was to tape up the boxes.

This method sped up the process of FFP production, enabling DSWD to produce more FFPs.



The assembly line method. Each repacker stood alongside the table and put in food items as the FFP box was moved from one end of the table to another. The repacker on the right, (in gray) would put rice in, the second (in black) would put in corned beef. They would then push the box along to the next repacker (in blue) who would put in beef loaf, and then push it along for the next repacker (in white) to put in coffee. The boxes would be moved to the other end of the table, where it would be sealed with tape (DSWD staff in red and green), stacked in pallets, and then carried by a forklift to the storage area.



However, this method had one challenge. The repackers would have to extend more effort in pushing the boxes along the table. This was a challenge, especially for repackers who would have to push the boxes along for hours. It is said that need is the mother of invention, and true enough to this saying, RROS had to invent something to overcome this challenge.

Enter Robertlee Davocol.

Robertlee, or more affectionately known as Betlee by his peers, works as a driver and a jack-of-all-trades under RROS. Using ingenuity and a few pieces of PVC pipe, ball bearings, found steel, and nuts and bolts, he was able to craft a fully functional Do-It-Yourself (DIY) roller system.

This effectively reduced strain on the part of the repackers, while simultaneously making the process smoother.



RROS' roller system, crafted using PVC pipes, ball bearings, found steel, nuts and bolts, and Filipino creativity. With this roller system, repackers are able to produce more FFPs without expending extra effort in pushing the boxes from one station to the next.

RESULTS/IMPACT



These innovations implemented by RROS have resulted in the more efficient production, storage and delivery of the FFPs, with each innovation from various partners contributing to the over-all performance of DSWD. These partners include DSWD FO X, for initially supplying the FFP boxes to FO VIII, DSWD's NDRMC and VDRC for providing technical assistance and IOM, for donating the racking system. Of course, these innovations would not have been completed without the ingenuity of DSWD FO VIII's staff.

1. More environmentally-friendly – due to the switch from plastic bags to boxes, DSWD was able to reduce the usage of plastic. The boxes themselves are stackable, thus also reducing the need for sacks, which were previously used to contain the plastic FFPs.
2. Easier identification of DSWD brand – beneficiaries are easily able to differentiate between relief items from the Local Government Units and DSWD through the packaging, since DSWD uses boxes, while the LGUs usually use bags.
3. Boxes are more secure – once sealed, the beneficiaries can be assured that the relief items packed at the RROS is exactly what they will receive. Boxes also prevent accidental spillage of relief items, especially due to rough handling during relief operations.
4. Easier organization and storage – the FFP box is stackable, enabling easier storage, compared to plastic bags. This also makes logistics easier as it is easier to count – one pallet equals 100 FFPs. This benefit is further increased by the usage of the racking system.
5. Vertical storage frees up floor space – due to the racking system, FFPs can now be stored vertically, thus freeing up floor space. With more floor space, DSWD can now accommodate more goods.
6. Faster production of FFPs – prior to the assembly line and the roller system, RROS can produce a maximum of 2,000 FFPs in a day. However, with the introduction of the assembly line and roller system, RROS was able to break its own record. Last July, RROS was able to produce 4,000 FFPs in a day – double what it was able to produce prior to these innovations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REPLICATION

Currently, only the NROC and the VDRC have a fully-mechanized system for the production of FFPs. With these two as its models, RROS applied ingenuity to improve the production and storage of its relief goods without having to request for additional funding or spend a single cent, since these improvements were either requested from other agencies, or were created from scratch from available materials.

This ingenuity has already caught the attention of several DSWD Field Offices, as well as Local Government Units.

Last July 2019, RROS staff headed by OIC Orville Berino, participated in the 2nd National Resource and Logistics Management Conference held in Cebu City. Representatives from all DSWD Field Offices across the 17 Regions in the Philippines attended the conference. One of the highlights was the presentation of each Region's best practices. With these innovations, DSWD FO VIII gained recognition when it won Over-all Winner in Good Practice Presentation on Resource and Logistics Management.



RROS was also invited last year as a resource agency by the Provincial Local Government Unit of Western Samar for a training of Municipal Social Welfare and Development Officers (MSWDOs) and Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officers (MDRRMOs) from the province. During the training, DSWD was able to impart these best practices to the LGUs, encouraging them to duplicate these practices at the local level.


The lessons learned while implanting these innovations were also put into practice during the relief operations for the families affected by the Cotabato earthquakes last October 2019. DSWD FO XII Regional Director Cezario Joel Espejo requested RROS staff from DSWD FO VIII to provide augmentation to the relief operations. RROS assisted in organizing the arrival of relief items and donations from various DSWD Field Offices and other agencies. They also assisted with the proper storage of these relief items.

Furthermore, these innovations are continually being implemented as RROS enlarges its operations. Earlier this year, DSWD FO VIII officially started its operations at a new warehouse in Palo, Leyte. RROS immediately applied all these innovations at the new warehouse – from the racking system, the assembly line method of FFP production, to the roller system.



DSWD FO VIII's new warehouse in Palo, Leyte, where all these innovations are implemented. In recognition of the efficiency of RROS in producing FFPs, NROC itself provided a brand new roller system. Meanwhile, the old roller system is still in operation at DSWD FO VIII's old warehouse. And same as before, these innovations did not require additional spending.

These new innovations are also incorporated in the Operations Manual for the Disaster Response Management Division. (Note: This Operations Manual is a draft and is currently undergoing review and revision. Currently, it is still pending the Regional Director's approval.)



to ensure the 24/7 operations, among others. Each member of the team is assigned in advance to a particular task during emergency so that when disaster arises the whole staff is prepared for immediate augmentation.

This operation may also be activated in the exigency of service or before/after a status alert is raised when:

- B.1. Mandated stockpile of 30,000 FFP is not readily available;
- B.2. There is a need to replenish stockpile to the minimum requirement after a disaster operation;
- B.3. Augmentation of FFPs or other relief items are not yet completed;
- B.4. And/or other case/s that is/are deemed appropriate.

IV. Facilities
The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) manages the Regional Resource Operations Center (RROC) in Brgy. Abucay Taeloban City, a facility where the FFPs and Raw Materials are processed and stored and the newly constructed warehouse located at Palo, Leyte this was planned storage for NFI.

V. Products

- a. Family Food Pack
A family food pack is a composition of:
 1. Four (4) Canned Sardines/Beef or Meat Loaf
 2. Four (4) Corned Beef
 3. Six (6) kilograms of bagged NFA rice and
 4. Six (6) sachets of coffee.
 Packed in one DSWD box.
- b. Non-Food Pack/Items
These are packed based on the demand and availability of items considering the basic necessity of affected families during disaster. Example of Non-Food packs are the hygiene kit which mostly composed of toothpaste, bath soap, shampoo, toothbrush and sanitary napkins and the sleeping kit which commonly composed of sleeping gear such as blanket/s, mosquito net, and mat and non-food item such as sacks, flashlights, blankets, etc.

PART IV – STANDARD OPERATION PROCEDURES
This part provides detailed procedures on how to manage relief goods procured and donated. This includes inventory, requisition, receiving and releasing, reverse logistics, inventory management, production and proper storage.

As stated in this Operations Manual the FFPs are packed inside the DSWD box. Included below are the instructions on the production of FFPs, which include the preparation of these boxes and the usage of the roller system



1.12.4 Packed rice

- Count all remaining rice bags for return.
 - Collect all tear or punctured packed rice.
 - Place 8 6kls of punctured or improperly sealed packed rice subject for re-bagging into an empty sack.
- 1.13 Transfer all unused materials using properly completed transfer slip.
- 1.14 Update/submit inventory report.

A2 Manual Production

All raw materials were pre-inspected before the actual production to ensure that all raw materials are in good condition.

- 1.1 Place formed box on the roller table.
- 1.2 Place 6kls of rice in the middle of DSWD box.
- 1.2.1 If the plastic bag of rice is damaged upon production, give the damage rice to the sweeper and replace it with the new one.
- 1.3 Re-inspect 2 tins of comed beef.
- 1.3.1 If tins are in good condition, place two (2) tins one on the left upper corner and one the right corner of the DSWD box.
- 1.3.2 If tins has/have damage/s in the can/s, place the damage tin/s in the designated box underneath the table and replace it/them with new ones.
- 1.4 Re-inspect four (4) comed beef.
- 1.4.1 If tins are in good condition, place the four (4) tins in the right corner of the DSWD box.
- 1.4.2 If tins has/have damage/s in the can/s, place the damage tin/s in the designated box underneath the table and replace it/them with new ones.
- 1.5 Re-inspect four (4) tins of canned tuna.
- 1.5.1 If tins are in good condition, place the four (4) tins in the right corner of the DSWD box.
- 1.5.2 If tins has/have damage/s in the can/s, place the damage tin/s in the designated box underneath the table and replace it/them with new ones.
- 1.6 Re-inspect four (5) sachets of coffee.
- 1.6.1 If sachets are in good condition, place the five (5) sachets of coffee on the in the right corner of the DSWD box.
- 1.6.2 If bundled coffees has/have defects/damaged, place the whole bundle in the designated box underneath the table and replace it with new one.
- 1.7 Re-inspect four (5) sachets of cereals.
- 1.7.1 If sachets are in good condition, place the five (5) sachets of cereals on the left corner of the DSWD box.
- 1.7.2 If bundled cereal has/have defects/damaged, place the whole

While DSWD FO VIII has not yet reached full mechanization in the production of FFPs, it can be assured that the FO VIII will continue to find ways to improve, to make sure that each FFP is produced with care and with efficiency and that DSWD can be relied on to provide quality relief items to families who depend on it after disasters.

REFERENCES

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