

The *Epal* Effect: A Theory-Based Assessment of the “Bawal ang *Epal* Dito” Campaign for the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*

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The “Bawal ang *Epal* Dito” (BAED) was implemented to protect the government’s 4Ps program from politicking. This communication campaign was assessed in preparation for the 2016 national elections according to the: (a) extent of stakeholders’ awareness, knowledge, and behaviors; (b) channels and messages; (c) efficiency; (d) and participation in its implementation. The following theories were used in the analysis: the Transtheoretical Model, Social Cognitive Theory, Framing Theory, and the Diffusion of Innovations Theory. The study shows the varying levels of awareness, knowledge, and behaviors among the campaign’s audiences. Assessing campaign channels revealed the most favorable evaluation, while efficiency and participation fared worst. The use of the word *epal* in the framing of the campaign’s messages resulted in positive and negative consequences.

Keywords: communication campaigns, campaign evaluation, communication for development, political campaigns

The “Bawal ang *Epal* Dito” (BAED) campaign was designed and implemented to prevent politicians from taking advantage of the government’s Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) to further their political ambitions (“Adoption/Implementation of the Guidelines on ‘BAWAL ANG EPAL DITO’ Campaign,” 2013). BAED was born out of verified reports from implementers and beneficiaries who believe that politicians control the selection and removal of household-beneficiaries from the program. Moreover, the campaign endeavored to correct the misunderstanding that the 4Ps was merely a dole-out strategy of the government. Thus, the campaign’s general objectives included informing its beneficiaries and the public about the program mechanisms, updates, and procedures to counter the misconception about the control of politicians over the Pantawid Pamilya program (Department of Social Welfare and Development [DSWD], n. d.-a).

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program is a human development program of the national government implemented through the Department

of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and in coordination with the local government units (LGUs). It is a social protection mechanism that invests in human capital that ensures children, aged 0-18 from poor households, grow up healthy and stay in school. It uses the conditional cash transfer scheme wherein beneficiaries receive cash grants based on their compliance with their co-responsibilities. These conditions include:

1. Pregnant women must avail of pre-and post-natal care, and be attended to during childbirth by a trained professional;
2. Parents or guardians must attend the family development sessions, which include topics on responsible parenting, health, and nutrition;
3. Children aged 0-5 must receive regular preventive health checkups and vaccines;
4. Children aged 6-14 must receive deworming pills twice a year; and
5. Children-beneficiaries aged 3-18 must enroll in school, and maintain an attendance of at least 85% of class days every month. (“The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program,” n.d. -a, para. 4)

The 4Ps is implemented by the National Program Management Office (NPMO). For the BAED communication program, the NPMO is provided technical assistance by the Social Marketing Division, with one focal division solely devoted to the 4Ps. The entire 4Ps, including the implementation of its component on the BAED campaign, is cascaded to 17 regions in the Philippines through the Regional Program Management Office (RPMO). Each RPMO has an Information Officer (IO) who provides technical assistance through their expertise in media and communication, with a focus on the implementation of the BAED campaign. Under the RPMO are the Provincial Offices whose cluster offices employ Municipal Links (MLs) to implement the 4Ps and the BAED campaign at the barangay levels. In total, around 9,000 MLs cater to around 4 million beneficiaries of the 4Ps (M. Pangilinan, personal communication, March 20, 2015). The program beneficiaries who are also the primary target audience of the BAED campaign are representatives of poor households with children aged 0 to 14 years old. These representatives are usually mothers or pregnant women (sometimes they are fathers or grandparents, etc.), and are carefully chosen through a rigorous process of enumeration involving determining

the level of poverty of each household. Those chosen give their consent to comply with the conditions set out in the 4Ps, and the beneficiaries select Parent Leaders (PLs) whom they identify as point persons to lead their neighborhood grantee groups and represent their barangay (M. Pangilinan, personal communication, March 20, 2015).

To ensure the strictly pro-poor and non-partisan identity of the 4Ps, the DSWD, across its offices, divisions, and personnel within the organization's structure, spearheaded the implementation of the "Bawal ang Epal Dito" Campaign initially during the midterm May 2013 national elections (the first BAED Campaign launched in May 2013 was tagged as BAED1). *Epal* is a Filipino slang derived from the word *pumapapel* used to describe a person who deliberately wants to grandstand, to steal the scene, or steal attention even in things that do not really concern them. The BAED campaign used this term to refer to politicians who used the 4Ps for politicking, especially during election period, and claimed that they have the power to enlist or delist 4Ps beneficiaries even if the selection was strictly implemented by the DSWD. The campaign had the following specific objectives:

1. Prevent politicians from taking advantage of the voting masses by threatening to delist them from the program if they do not support the politicians in the upcoming elections; and
2. Empower the public, especially the beneficiaries of the program, through knowledge of 4Ps selection and removal process. (DSWD, n.d.-a)

The campaign was briefly suspended after the May 2013 elections and revived in September 2013 for the barangay elections (BAED2). Implementers found it more critical to cascade the project down to the village level because barangay political candidates had more direct interactions with beneficiary-voters who were susceptible to threats from the candidates. The barangay level BAED campaign had the following objectives:

1. Beneficiaries will be informed and assured about program mechanisms, updates, and procedures to counter the misconceptions regarding program selection and delisting process;
2. To protect the beneficiaries' right to suffrage by providing them with the guidelines of the BAED and information about appropriate channels where they can file complaints against electoral candidates;
3. Empower the general public to maximize use of the

Grievance Redress System;

4. Strengthen the feedback mechanisms from and between beneficiaries and partner agencies. (DSWD, n.d.-a)

Essentially, the campaign aimed to effect two types of changes among 4Ps beneficiaries: (1) to increase knowledge and understanding of the program, access to correct information is necessary; (2) behavioral change by using the Grievance Redress System (GRS) and other interpersonal channels—such as the Family Development Sessions (FDS) for complaints and feedback—to prevent undue advantage by electoral candidates (DSWD, n.d.-a).

The next national elections were slated for May 2016. The DSWD assessed the implementation process of the campaign to probe its effectiveness. Lessons learned from the assessment revealed the problems, challenges, and good practices of the campaign, and contributed to a draft of recommendations for the enhancement of the communication campaign used for the upcoming elections.

Thus, this rapid assessment of the effectiveness of the BAED campaign had the following objectives:

1. To assess the extent and nature of beneficiaries and stakeholders' awareness, knowledge, and behaviors towards the BAED campaign:
 - a. Awareness of the BAED campaign
 - b. Knowledge on BAED key messages, program mechanics, and mechanisms
 - c. Behavior in reporting “epal” violators through access to the GRS and other modes of receiving feedback
2. To evaluate the channels and messages used in the campaign, according to the:
 - a. Distribution of channels and messages
 - b. Exposure to these channels and messages
 - c. Appropriateness of channels
 - d. Clarity of message
3. To assess the efficiency and participation involved in the implementation of the campaign, specifically:
 - a. Efficiency of the processes, and implementer's resources
 - b. The extent of planners and implementers' participation in national and local strategies

The evaluation research focused on three major concepts: effectiveness, channels and messages, and efficiency and participation. Effectiveness was measured by how well the BAED campaign objectives were achieved,

namely: awareness of the campaign; knowledge on 4Ps facts, program mechanics, and mechanisms; and behavior in terms of accessing the GRS and other modes of feedback.

The second set of concepts—channels and messages—were assessed in terms of channel distribution, the exposure of the beneficiaries to the campaign messages, the perceived appropriateness of these channels, and the clarity of the campaign messages.

Implementers assessed the campaign's efficiency based on their experiences of the processes, resources, personalities and agencies involved in planning and implementation. The research participants' assessments were anchored and analyzed using the framework of the study, discussed in the next sections of this paper.

Beyond the practical significance of this study to the national elections, this study also contributed to theory and evidence-based analyses, and to the evaluation of communication campaigns. A caveat though: while the main objective of the BAED Campaign was to insulate the entire 4Ps Program from politicking to ensure integrity among its stakeholders, this study focused on the evaluation of the BAED Campaign alone while incidentally touching on issues pertaining to the 4Ps Program. However: by no means was this research an evaluation of the entire social protection program.

Methodology

This research employed a communication research design, particularly a campaign evaluation research. An evaluation of campaign effects occurred on two levels: process evaluation and summative evaluation, which served as the study's over-arching framework. The research design involved data-gathering and analysis methods within the context of a rapid assessment, given that the national election season was due to begin a few months after this research was commissioned.

Process evaluation of communication campaigns considered implementation, and how the elements of the campaign are executed according to the plan. On the other hand, summative evaluation at the end of a campaign focused on its effectiveness or success based on reaching objectives. Summative evaluation was limited because of time restrictions; reliance on qualitative data-gathering method (focus group discussion) and analysis; and the lack of baseline data about beneficiary knowledge and behavior prior to the implementation of the research.

This research, however, indicated these changes using a limited number of beneficiaries' and implementers' perceptions, narratives, and testimonials that have no quantification and generalizability value.

The main data-gathering method employed for this rapid assessment was

focus group discussion (FGD). Five (5) FGDs were conducted at the DSWD complex, Batasan Road, Quezon City: 13 April 2015 (FGD with National Program Management Office, Social Marketing Division, COMELEC and DILG Technical Working Group; and FGD with parent-leaders); 24 April 2015 (FGDs with Information Officers and Municipal/City Links); and 30 April 2015 (FGD with beneficiaries). There were a total of eighteen (18) beneficiaries-participants (12 from the first group of parent-leaders and 6 beneficiaries from the second batch of FGD), eight (8) participants from the National Program group, seven (7) Information Officers, and seven (7) Municipal/City Links-participants, for a total of forty (40) participants.

The two groups of parent-leaders and beneficiaries were chosen purposively and conveniently to represent an urban area (National Capital Region or NCR) and a rural area (provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon or CALABARZON) where the BAED Campaign was implemented. They were also chosen based on their proximity to the DSWD National Office where the FGDs were conducted.

The Information Officers (IOs) were selected purposively to represent the following regions: 5, 6, 7, and 10. The IOs were selected purposively, following maximum variation, to include field offices which experienced challenges (called high profile cases by the DSWD; e.g., Regions 5 and 7) in implementing the campaign. The same maximum variation selection was done for the participation of the Municipal Links. The MLs who participated in the FGDs were from field offices in CAR and Region 7 (areas with high profile cases), Regions 1, 4-A, and 4b (provinces of Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan or MIMAROPA). As for the FGD participants from the National Program Management Office and partner agencies, the participants were selected to represent different positions directly involved in the implementation of the BAED Campaign.

The FGDs were recorded, with the participants' consent, and transcribed for efficient data analysis. The qualitative responses were analyzed using the Typology method of data analysis, organizing salient themes derived from the participants' anecdotes and assessments under the three main concepts: effectiveness, channels and messages, and efficiency and participation, and further analyzed using the campaign communication theories discussed in the following section.

Data analysis used theories on formative research, message design, and campaign effects. With the absence of a preproduction phase, the implementation of the two previous BAED campaigns will be used to guide revisions for succeeding BAED campaigns.

Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

To study campaign effects, this research made use of the formative research theory Stages of Change or the Transtheoretical Model to inform the process of drawing out good practices and raising recommendations for succeeding campaigns. The Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente (1983) posits that individuals are at different stages in behavioral change and the different stages require different strategies to incite mitigation actions. The table below summarizes the stages of change as defined by the model.

Table 1: Stages of change as defined by the transtheoretical model (Howell, 2014)

Stage	Definition
Precontemplation	No intention to change behavior in the foreseeable future (usually measured as the next six months). Individuals may be unaware or under-aware of problem behaviors, or have tried to change but relapsed.
Contemplation	Thinking about changing behavior (often measured as seriously considering action within six months), but not committed to action now. Weighing up pros and cons of current situation and change.
Preparation	Intending to take action in the near future (usually measures as the next month) and preparing to do so. Small behavior changes may already have been made.
Action	Behavior changes (usually measured according to some specific criteria) have been achieved for up to six months.
Maintenance	Behavior changes have been maintained for more than six months. Not a static stage as individuals still need to work to prevent relapse.
Termination	New behavior has become habitual; no temptation to relapse. "Termination" is not always a practical reality—for some behaviors, a lifetime of maintenance is realistic. This stage is often not mentioned.

The TTM has been used to draft interventions, programs, or campaigns that would promote positive behaviors such as healthy eating (cf. Spencer, Wharton, Moyle, & Adams, 2007), physical exercise (cf. Spencer, Adams, Malone, Roy, and Yost, 2006), and mammography screening (cf. Spencer, Pagell, & Adams, 2005). TTM has been useful in dealing with issues like substance abuse, and in helping to educate against unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (cf. Migneault, Adams, & Read, 2005; Horowitz, 2003). It has also been a popular and enduring model to evaluate communication campaign and media messages. For example, TTM was used to create a short film to promote breast cancer screening (cf. Borrayo, 2004). TTM was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the film *Supersize Me*

(2004) as a tool in nutrition education (Cottone & Byrd-Bredbenner, 2007), and in understanding the impact of climate change films in encouraging mitigation action on its audiences (cf. Howell, 2014).

A relevant study situated in the Philippines was a study of the “Boo! Boo! Rat!” media campaign in Zaragosa, Nueva Ecija (Flor & Singleton, 2010), which used the theoretical lens of TTM to evaluate the campaign’s success in promoting ecologically-based rodent management (EBRM) as a community-level approach. They found that the most effective pathways to reach farmers were personal interactions with champions of EBRM; high-profile activities such as the campaign launch and TV coverage; and constant visibility in the media.

In analyzing the message design of the campaign, this study employed Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory, which proposes that people learn through observing the attitudes, behavior, and the consequences of other people’s behavior (Bandura, 1977).

Media messages and content that audiences like and identify with, can improve knowledge and change attitudes; model desirable behaviors, which can increase self-efficacy (the idea that they can adopt the behaviors); and positively reinforce action through providing rewards for desirable behaviors and punishment for undesirable ones (Bandura, 2004).

The theory also states that a successful message design employs the following strategies: a message source with whom the audience identifies; learning by demonstration; message as carried by appropriate channels; and motivators such as reinforcement or punishment (Silk, 2009). The theory has been applied by many entertainment-education programs such as radio serials, soap operas, and telenovelas (Wray, Hornik, Gandy, Stryker, Ghez, & Mitchell-Clark, 2004; Wilkin, Valente, Murphy, Cody, Huang, & Beck, 2007; Usdin, Singhal, Shongwe, Goldstein, & Shabalala, 2004), and has been successful in changing attitudes and behaviors towards social issues such as breast cancer, family planning, and domestic violence.

The evaluation of the campaign also benefitted from Erving Goffman’s Framing Theory (1974), which suggests that how something is presented to the audience (or the “frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information.

Goffman (1959) puts forth that primary frameworks, natural and social, help individuals interpret data and connect their experience to a wider social context. Of the many studies conducted using Framing Theory, a pertinent journal article by David, Legara, Atun, and Monterola (2014) examined how news articles framed the population issue in the Philippines, noting that key terms such as “population control” and “population management” were

associated with developmental and economic goals, while “reproductive health” and “family planning” were linked with women’s and youth’s health issues.

Thus, it is crucial to examine how the BAED campaign framed and presented its messages. Received by its target audience, these messages had been decontextualized and removed from surrounding issues like the elections and the 4P.

To fully understand the concepts of efficiency and participation, the study turns to Roger’s Diffusion of Innovations Theory (1962; 1971), concentrating on the fourth main element in the diffusion of new ideas: the social system. Diffusion is concerned with the spread of messages communicated through certain channels over time among members of a social system (Rogers, 1971). In the case of the BAED campaign, it is crucial to look into the participation of DSWD and its partners, as well as their planning and implementation processes, in effecting attitudinal and behavioral changes among its beneficiaries. Roger’s (1971) notions of “change agent” and opinion leadership, or the degree an individual informally influences other individuals’ attitudes, may also affect the rate of adoption of a new idea.

The documented success of some of the intervention programs and studies on effective communication suggests that it might be worth applying insights from the model to evaluate and design the BAED campaign. Insights generated by previous, successful programs have helped identify the stage of change intended audiences have reached, and the kind of messages appropriate with these audiences. The literature suggests that it is imperative to assess a campaign from all stages of the communication process: from the source that creates the message, the communication channels used, the content and how it is framed, its target audience and stakeholders, potential effect and reception of the campaign, and the layers of context that the campaign is enveloped in.

Results and Discussion

The following are the data obtained from the FGDs, organized according to the main concepts assessed in this study.

1. Effectiveness of Campaign in terms of Awareness, Knowledge, and Behavior

a. Awareness

All Information Officers (IOs) and Municipal/City Links (MLs) clearly expressed that they were aware of the BAED from the moment it was formally introduced. However, they disagree regarding the date and process of implementation. For some of the IOs, campaign was handed down to them through an orientation with their Regional Directors. Other IOs were

informed by the DSWD Social Marketing Unit (SMU). A few recounted having gone through a series of orientations. Others said that they received a memo from the DSWD outlining the main points of the BAED and that it was to be implemented soon. They stressed that BAED reached them as a final and executory matter. They were not part of the campaign's conceptualization phase.

One informant said that he had to instantly become aware of the basic information of the campaign because he was responsible for its local implementation, without specific instructions on how to go about it. Weeks later, he received the campaign communication materials and that was it (Informant 2, April 24, 2015).

One ML, however, shared that in his municipality, the orientation was more formal because DSWD officials from the Central Office were in attendance. DSWD Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman was even present during the BAED launching (Informant 7, April 24, 2015). Other than this particular ML, the rest expressed that the introduction of the campaign was done haphazardly. There was no room for them to make clarifications or bring up suggestions.

The beneficiaries learned about the BAED campaign from their respective parent leaders. One informant confessed that she only came to know about the campaign a few months back. Because their role required them to work closely with the MLs, the parent leaders-participants said they first heard of the campaign from MLs who explained that familiarity with BAED was required by 4Ps. The campaign was discussed during the parent-leaders' regular monthly Family Development Sessions (FDS) (Informant 11, personal communication, April 13, 2015). When asked about the objectives of the BAED campaign, the parent-leaders said that it sought to improve the 4Ps program and provide more information on how to make the most of the program (Informant 9, personal communication, April 13, 2015). The parent-leaders learned that they should not meddle with other organizations, especially if they are political in nature, and that they should be wary of politicians using them for their own ends.

The FGD participants were asked about their perception of the word *pumapapel* or *umi-epal* (Filipino slang which means to grandstand, to steal the scene, or steal attention even in things that do not really concern them). They associated the term with the following: *gumagapang* (to crawl), *nagpapasikat* (to play famous), *nagpapakitanggilas* (to show off), *nangangampanya* (to campaign) *hinihingian ng boto* (soliciting votes), and *nagpapakabait* (pretending to be good). The parent leaders-participants associated the meaning of EPAL with *pasaway*, or troublesome. They believed that the word is simple, easy to remember, and relatable, which

makes for effective recall. From the National Program Management FGD, one participant said that there is no direct translation in other dialects, and only Tagalog-speaking communities understood the term. The possibility of misunderstanding may call for clarification of the meaning and application of the word.

The participants feel that, in general, the use of *epal* is a double-edged sword: beneficiaries who understand the term *epal* have a positive perception towards the BAED campaign, but those who do not understand the term and its context feel awkward applying it.

As to the question “who is the target audience of the anti-*epal* campaign”, answers varied: beneficiaries, politicians, and *ang mga makasalan* (those who commit violations).

b. Knowledge

The IOs had the most comprehensive knowledge of BAED—why it was implemented and why it was necessary. Participants thought that the main message of the campaign was to empower the beneficiaries with the information that only DSWD has the power to include or exclude families from the 4Ps list. With this information, the beneficiaries were expected to make an informed choice come election time. Naturally, this informed choice meant they could not be easily persuaded by any politician’s promise or threat.

IOs were well informed regarding health and education as being part of beneficiaries’ rights and outside politicians’ control.

The MLs’ knowledge of the campaign was more specific. MLs were specifically informed regarding politicians’ role in 4Ps processes. The BAED campaign’s message slant reminded MLs that beneficiaries should be made aware of these shrewd politicians. On the other hand, MLs were tasked to remind politicians that their schemes were under public surveillance.

Election-situated knowledge. For the beneficiaries, their knowledge of the BAED campaign may affect their roles as voters, election watchers, coordinators, and campaign supporters. The focus group discussions revealed the beneficiaries’ confused understanding of their involvement in the elections. One beneficiary said:

Dahil sa BAED, medyo nagkagulo na. Okay din lang na hindi na pala kami basta-basta mag wa-watcher or maging coordinator sa election kasi magagamit kami. [Because of the BAED, things got chaotic. It was okay that we were not assigned to be watchers or coordinators during the elections because we might be taken advantage of.] (Informant 3, personal communication, April 13, 2015)

FGD participants revealed that the beneficiaries, especially the parent leaders, saw the campaign as prohibiting them from being actively involved in partisan political activities. This is despite the fact that the BAED campaign does not intend to curtail the beneficiaries' right to participate as watchers or to campaign for particular candidates.

Discussions about the BAED revealed that beneficiaries enjoyed “more *grasya*” (bribes) with little guilt or fear. A parent-leader in close contact with MLs and who was required to have more information about the BAED than the ordinary parent revealed how, in her family alone, they supported candidates from different parties after they no longer felt obliged to vote straight just because one political party had given them something.

Knowledge on multi-sectoral partnership. Majority of the participants revealed that they did not know about the involvement of the DILG and the COMELEC in the BAED campaigns. Only the IOs and the MLs were aware that this campaign was a partnership with DILG and the COMELEC. DSWD was the primary source of all messages, and the primary implementer.

Knowledge of the Grievance Redress System (GRS). Although the participants knew of the text hotline used to receive complaints, even recalling seeing it printed on banners and flyers, no one was able to recall the exact number of the hotline. One beneficiary even joked about how she would “threaten” to report fellow beneficiaries, but that nothing would come out of it. Another participant asked: “*Pero kung magsumbong ako, anong gagawin ko?*” [If I were to report, what exactly would I do?] (Informant 1, personal communication, April 24, 2015). In general, the participants appreciate the existence of the “sumbungan” or report hotline because it adds security. They also like the idea that the complainant can remain anonymous.

c. Behavior

Grievances. According to the FGD group with participants from the National Program Management Office and Social Marketing Division, one of the success indicators of the campaign was the increase in the volume of complaints received by the GRS.

A participant said that beneficiaries can easily access text mobile messaging, and information about hotlines was included on distributed stickers, posters, and other paraphernalia (Informant 5, personal communication, April 24, 2015).

An IO recalled that, in one region, a total of ten written grievances were made in just one month and, in another area, five complaints were raised in the week leading up to the election. Another IO reported some 25 written complaints connected to the BAED filed in their region (Informant

6, personal communication, April 13, 2015).

Sample complaints included: one candidate promised an increase in financial remuneration for 4Ps; another candidate created his own list of beneficiaries to give the impression that something good would come out of his election; tarpaulins bearing the 4P initials appropriated by a politician to include their name; and beneficiaries riding politicians' private vehicles.

Documents from the National Program Management Office reveal that the GRS garnered a total of 101 election-related complaints. 82 complaints were resolved, but the remaining 29 cases were pending verification.

According to the participants, their complaints were usually conveyed to the MLs directly, collected via grievance desks in barangay halls, or communicated to DSWD officials visiting the area. However, the beneficiaries confessed that most of the grievances raised were more on the bigger 4Ps program rather than the BAED violations.

The parent-leaders and the national TWG participants observed challenges in handling BAED complaints. For example: the text messaging service did not allow for consistent tagging and categorization. Regions used different categories. Worse, some BAED-related posts could not be accounted for.

Name recall and everyday discourse. *Epal*, *pumapapel*, and *bawal ang epal* became community buzzwords. Although these words were often within the context of jokes, MLs and IOs considered the recall evidence that the campaign had made an impact on people's behavior.

More questions and clarification at the Family Development Sessions (FDS). There was also an observed increase in participation at the FDS in terms of engagement in discussions and clarification of concerns. The MLs and IOs attributed this to beneficiaries' newfound trust in DSWD credibility, which manifested in beneficiaries' increased respect for processes and protocols.

Beneficiaries' behavioral changes. The campaign restored a sense of independence and citizenship in its beneficiaries who attributed their rational view of politicians' power to the campaign. Many of them believed that had it not been for the campaign, they would still assume that local politicians worked closely with DSWD in making the list of families for the 4Ps. They also admitted to becoming more vocal about certain politicians' dubious behavior in conversations among fellow beneficiaries.

Enormity of tasks. The MLs and IOs likewise considered being overwhelmed by the enormity of their tasks to implement the campaign. What the MLs and IOs recognized as the strongest glitch in the BAED campaign was the lack of coordination among partner agencies (including COMELEC and DILG). Using the GRS as an example, the participants

stressed that COMELEC and DILG needed to implement clear sanctions for BAED violators to relieve MLs and IOs of the burden of assuring beneficiaries that their BAED grievances would be addressed.

Unintended consequence: perceived change of behavior of politicians.

It was, however, the change in behavior among politicians that was least anticipated, or, for the most part, underestimated. The politicians were expected to tone down their manner of making their roles felt, but the DSWD, was not able to predict LGUs' sometimes subtle, sometimes explicit, animosity for the MLs as a consequence.

One IO used the term *sakal* or "to choke" to indicate the pressure MLs experienced as liaisons between DSWD and the LGUs. The MLs who participated in the FGDs considered themselves "lucky ones" because they had not experienced unwanted hostility from their partner LGUs. They also revealed certain cautionary tales of their fellow MLs in other areas and from predecessors who resigned due to unwarranted animosity they received from certain local officials after BAED was launched. Three MLs recounted fellow MLs' stories of receiving death threats and the harassment their families received.

Analysis using the Transtheoretical Model. Clearly, the levels of awareness, knowledge, and behavior brought about by the BAED campaign vary among the primary and secondary audiences of the campaign. Those closest to the national-level initiative (IO, ML, and up to a certain extent, the parent-leaders) as most aware, most knowledgeable, and as displaying the most behavioral changes. However, those who were considered the main audience of the campaign, the beneficiaries, have exhibited lower awareness (one participant declaring that she only found out about BAED recently), knowledge (election-orientation, unclear political participation), and considerably few behavioral responses (101 reports after two campaigns, with beneficiaries choosing not to report because of distrust of the GRS).

The transtheoretical model suggests that in order for an audience to move to behavioral change, it must go through the lower stages of knowledge and awareness first. Subsequent recommendations must focus on the main audience of the BAED campaign, the beneficiaries, operating at the lowest awareness level with indications of knowledge gains, although confused.

"Behavior" as a component of "action" in the Transtheoretical Model was best observed through beneficiaries' participation or non-participation in the GRS, in Family Development Sessions, and in identifying *epal* politicians.

While the theory stands on the premise of people's change agential potential, the GRS failed to help people identify *pa-epal* politicians. It

has, however, increased the number of filed complaints regarding the beneficiaries' status in the 4Ps, a behavioral change that may not be a direct goal of the campaign.

The FDS, on the other hand, has provided avenue for beneficiaries to ask for clarifications and express their complaints regarding their status in the 4Ps—a desired effect on “behavior” as “participation.” Beneficiaries' participation was considerably important no matter how subtle such action maybe. Since the campaign urges beneficiaries to *makilahok* [participate] and *magsumbong* [report], the act of voicing queries reveals an awareness of how they are personally accountable as beneficiaries. “Awareness,” therefore, overlaps with “behavior” through participation in FDS, and is reflective of the how the 4Ps provides a venue for people's agency.

2. Channels and Messages of the Campaign

In the FGD with participants from the National Program Management Office, the following were identified as the communication channels used to disseminate BAED campaign messages:

- Traditional Media (print, television, and radio);
- Social media containing viral ads of the campaign;
- Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter posts by implementers and partners;
- Posts on blogging websites highlighting articles about the campaign;
- Family Development Sessions (FDS) of the Pantawid Pamilya Program during which campaign messages were disseminated and discussed.

In the municipal and provincial areas and the different barangays outside of Metro Manila, MLs were primarily responsible for information dissemination. They distributed pins, buttons, and flyers to brief prospective beneficiaries about the BAED campaign. Briefers for the ML were also used as guides during scheduled FDS discussions. Radio guestings (which covered the regional areas) were also implemented. According to one participant, vehicles with a public address system or a megaphone were used to disseminate information and make important announcement in rural areas.

The implementation group released print advertorials in three (3) major broadsheets, and television commercials with two (2) major TV networks. The commercials were aired during primetime—11 in the morning—coinciding with a very popular soap opera called *Please Be Careful with My Heart* to reach stay-at-home mothers.

Printed flyers were distributed to every household in regional areas.

Posters and tarpaulins were also posted in different facilities such as schools, health centers, and barangay halls. The posters disseminated were nationwide in scope.

Some MLs expressed that they were responsible for disseminating posters and other campaign materials. It was also their discretion as to where these materials would be posted or disseminated as there were no clear guidelines. The IOs, on the other hand, felt that it was primarily their job to disseminate materials. Both groups, however, agreed that, except for the tarpaulins, the number of communication materials was enough. BAED campaign materials received by the parent-leaders include buttons, flyers, and small stickers. Some parent-leaders mentioned that they watched television advertisements on Channels 4 and 7.

Only some beneficiaries saw pins and stickers, while others did not see fliers about the BAED. The tarpaulins were the most memorable materials among all those mentioned. No beneficiary heard any BAED radio commercial, while some saw BAED advertisements on TV. The beneficiaries suggest that, more than the quantity of materials, there should be concerted efforts to explain the messages in the tarpaulins and the flyers:

*Kasi po kahit gaano kalaki pa yung tarpaulin na nakalagay, kung hindi naman po nila alam: “Ano ba to?,” ‘Ang alam ko sa Epal pasaway, e hindi ko naman alam kung sino si epal,’ [You know, even if there was a huge tarpaulin posted, we don’t know what it means. What I know is that *epal* means stubborn, but I can’t tell who *epal* is.] (Informant 9, April 13, 2015).*

For the IOs and MLs, the FDS venue was the most effective communication channel for the campaign. As the beneficiaries’ queries intensified, so did the IOs and MLs’ need to research the exchange of ideas among their peers on the mechanics of the BAED campaign. As for the parent-leaders, they believe that seminars about the BAED campaign should be held regularly. They observe that having a lot of paraphernalia helps, but some people cannot even read or comprehend big words so it would be useless. A seminar, coupled with flyers, stickers and buttons, would be better. They also mentioned that television is a good medium to spread the campaign to the people. One participant said that even if they did not finish higher education, they can understand and relate to people on television.

Grievance Redress System (GRS) as a special channel. The Grievance Redress System (GRS) is as an effective forum for fielding questions and complaints from beneficiaries because almost everyone has access to a mobile phone, which is quick and easy to use. According to parent-leaders,

many beneficiaries make their way to the office to file complaints or clarify matters concerning them. Their first instinct is to confer among themselves, then with their MLs. If the matter is not solved, then they seek help from higher authorities.

Emphasizing the use of the Transtheoretical Model as a theory for evaluating interventions aimed at making positive changes in people, the beneficiaries' participation in the GRS showed a change in behavior, which was an intended effect of the campaign. However, the use of the GRS did not record beneficiaries' active participation as vigilance against politicians making *epal*. However, the GRS remains a great tool for other future interventions DSWD may have planned.

Messages. The participants from the National Program Office clarified that the campaign's main tagline is "Bawal ang Epal Dito." They added that the campaign also espoused the following supporting campaign tagline:

- *Makialam. Magsumbong. Huwag matakot.* [Be active. Report. Do not be afraid.]
- *Sumunod sa Alituntunin.* [Follow the Guidelines.]
- *Anumang pananakot, pagdidikta, o maling impormasyon...dapat isumbong sa DSWD.* [All threats, commands, or wrong information must be reported to the DSWD.]
- *Benipisyong pang-edukasyon at pangkalusugan ay karapatan mong matanggap kung ikaw ay benepisaryo ng programa.* [You have the right to educational and health benefits if you are a beneficiary of the program.]
- *Sa pakikipagtulungan ng Department of Interior and Local Government and Commission on Elections.* [Through the partnership of the Department of Interior and Local Government and Commission on Elections.]

The IOs articulated the confusing elements in the BAED message. They contended that the imperative *bawal ang epal* sounded like an order, and this was the message's strength. They observed, however, that the tagline did not speak to a specific audience, targeting program beneficiaries and politicians.

Because the message declared a prohibition, the BAED tagline seemed to target politicians infamous for boasting of unmerited achievements. However, the IOs, Regional Planning Coordinators (RPC), and MLs clarified that the BAED empowers beneficiaries by arming them with information to deal with politicians during elections, and a renewed sense of compliance with the conditions of the 4Ps program.

For the majority of the beneficiaries, the “don’t” in the *bawal ang epal* was targeted at the politicians. Beneficiaries focused on short-term election matters rather than their commitment to the entirety of the 4Ps. The IOs and MLs did not say that the campaign was altogether useless, but insisted that it could have been maximized had the messaging been clearer.

One IO said that the campaign used a “one size fits all” message, a “blasted” model that sacrificed clarity in favor of a wider scope. The MLs, on the other hand, thought that “Bawal ang Epal” was still the best tagline for the campaign because of its shaming appeal and good recall. They also felt that the DSWD could have properly oriented politicians and provided customized informative communication materials to clarify the do’s and don’ts of the campaign.

Another concern that was raised was the vernacular of the word *epal* as originating from *pumapapel/papel*. Several participants expressed that *epal* did not carry the same weight in other Philippine languages that it did in Tagalog. Therefore, a probable localization of the word should be considered.

Analysis using the Social Cognitive Theory and Framing. For strategic message design and successful campaign effects, the social cognitive theory suggests looking at the appropriateness of the message channels; the message source, making sure that the audience could relate well with this source; the opportunity to learn by effective demonstration; and provision of motivators, some reward or punishment, for the campaign audience. The BAED campaign seemed to have used all potential channels to reach its audiences. Communication campaign literature suggests that the best way to reach its audience, and for them to adopt a certain idea or product, is to use multiple channels: mass media, community channels, and interpersonal communication.

BAED’s trimedia channels enabled “Bawal ang Epal” to permeate the minds of many people at once, thus creating a normative stance that sticks to the minds of the target audience. The community channels—particularly the favored tarpaulins—the flyers, stickers, and briefers supplemented the trimedia campaign and fueled the interest of the audience at the grassroots level where the *epal* activities are most felt. Interpersonal channels—the FDS and informal talks with parent-leaders and others—were useful in clarifying, discerning, and recording behavioral responses. In terms of the message source, the national trimedia campaign used ordinary people as communicators, making the whole campaign more down to earth and relatable to its target audience.

Using the framing theory, the term *epal* is perceived to be catchy because it shames abusive politicians using this Tagalog vernacular. However, the

phrasing of *Bawal Ang Epal Dito* confuses the “reader” of the campaign as to whether the campaign actually targets the politicians (as the tagline’s voice seems to be addressing the politicians to stay away) or the beneficiaries, as the intended audience of the campaign. Because the *epal* brand seems to have been constructed at the national level in Manila, the brand is not automatically appealing to non-Tagalog-speaking regions.

Strategic communication also claims that a successful campaign ought to have just one clear and compelling message. The BAED campaign has one too many. Five sub-messages branch out from election matter to the bigger 4Ps program.

3. Efficiency and Participation

Conceptualizing the “Epal” brand. The participants admitted that the conceptualization and implementation of the BAED campaign was done in the swiftest way possible:

Ang nangyari kasi pinagawa kami ng presentation. Then in-approve ni [DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman]. Mabilisan talaga siya. Tapos binigay sa legal, sa COMELEC, tapos sa DILG. [What happened was, we were asked to make a presentation. Then it was approved by [DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman]. It was really quick. Then it was given to legal, to COMELEC, then DILG.] (Informant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2015)

Right after the approval of the Joint Memorandum Circular (“Adoption/ Implementation of the Guidelines,” 2013), implementation began immediately in the regional offices. One participant divulged that before the campaign there had been no baseline study on the effectiveness of such a campaign. They chose the term *epal* because it was popular during the time of message construction. It was frequently used by bloggers on the web and social media users. Some individuals were wary of using the term because it sent a very strong and negative message, but then the proposal was received by top management and the main message was approved without a hitch.

Financial Resources. The participants stated that “DSWD funds are clearly for social welfare” (Informant 2, personal communication, April 13, 2015), and there is “too strict monitoring of funds and budget allocation in the 4Ps program” (Informant 3, personal communication, April 24, 2015) so there was no budget for marketing the BAED campaign.

According to a participant, their budget was questioned because they posted advertisements for bidding. Since the 4Ps was created to give the beneficiaries a sense of agency primarily through financial incentives, it

matters that the allotted financial resources be optimized. Consequently, the BAED campaign bolstered this sense of agency by providing information about their rights and responsibilities as beneficiaries and, thus, a better shot at success: children going to school, pregnant women going for regular health check ups, etc. As with many interventions, funds went towards the betterment of welfare families. The Transtheoretical Model recognizes that “action as participation” translates to beneficiaries receiving funds directly. As proposed by Prochaska and DiClemente’s (1983) Transtheoretical Model, action as participation is an intended effect. In the case of BAED, beneficiaries participating in the vigilance and monitoring of who makes *epal* underscores an even more important intended effect: the 4Ps funds going directly to the beneficiaries. It is not, however, the aim of this research to establish a connection between the success of the BAED campaign with the success of the 4Ps.

Human Resources and Participation. The FGD participants suggest that there should be more involvement and participation coming from other DSWD units, offices, and bureaus. The participants are convinced that the BAED campaign should be a joint effort with the local government units concerned, and that there should be teamwork in implementing the program, consistency in delivering messages, and full support in terms of human resources.

According to the participants from the National Program Management Office, the BAED team needs the commitment and presence of partner agencies during the campaign. Though the GRS division, the social marketing division, and the institutional partnership division are aware of their roles and responsibilities, room for improvement exists in the research and assessment of the campaign.

According to participants, the program lacks in-house researchers and field researchers. They strongly believe that “assessment is really needed because the program has 4.4 million beneficiaries” (Informant 8, personal communication, April 13, 2015). Participants reveal that there is no budget allocated for campaign assessment. There were no baseline studies done, and there was no effort to conceive of studies assessing the effectiveness of the BAED campaign.

As posited by the Transtheoretical Model, all interventions are aimed at a change in behavior (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1983). However: the BAED program only measures beneficiaries’ behavior change only during their participation, and via feedback submitted to DSWD. The other concept in the Transtheoretical Model, the maintenance of changed behavior, hinges on their continued participation and continued feedback. Unfortunately, the DSWD cannot sustain the BAED campaign effectively alone. There has

to be better coordination among government units to sustain behavioral changes. This is most especially true for the GRS. If the beneficiaries' complaints go nowhere in the pipeline of redress, participants will feel that their participation is not worth the effort.

Assumed involvement of everyone. The MLs and the IOs assumed everybody was supposed to be involved. However: many were not fully aware that one campaign message included COMELEC and DILG as DSWD's partners. Although BAED was the central office's brainchild, they had no input in its construction: "*Basta sa akin, ang IO ang magpapalaganap dapat ng information, tapos susuportahan ng mga ML at mga parent leader. Yun na yun.*" [For me, the IO should be the one to disseminate information, and then the MLs and the parent leaders give support. That's it.] one IO clarified (Informant 10, personal communication, April 24, 2015).

LGUs should have also been oriented. When asked to assess stakeholders' level of participation, MLs and IOs strongly recommend that the LGUs receive an orientation session about BAED before it was launched:

Parang nakakagulat na lang na bilang ML parang nagpapasaring na pala ako sa mga local officials. Palusot ko na lang, "Hehehe, kasali po tayong lahat dito." [It is really surprising that as ML, it is as if I was speaking indirectly to the local officials. My excuse was, "We are all in this together (laughing)."] (Informant 3, personal communication, April 13, 2015)

Analysis using the concept of Change Agency. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined change agents as:

[P]rofessionals who influence innovation-decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency. In most cases, a change agent seeks to secure the adoption of new ideas, but may also attempt to slow the diffusion and prevent the adoption of certain innovations (p. 227).

Within the BAED campaign IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders function as change agents working with the DSWD national office. Because of their on-ground expertise and connections, change-agents are considered "technical assistance workers and local level bureaucrats" (Rogers, 1962, p. 267). As crucial conduits, IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders connect the DSWD to its beneficiaries at the lowest level. Their knowledge and skill-level affect the efficiency of the processes, maximizing use of limited resources, and the overall effectiveness of the campaign.

Having effected a desirable behavioral change among its beneficiaries,

the BAED campaign’s “change agents”—as defined by the Diffusion of Innovations Theory—coincides with and supports the Transtheoretical Model’s concept of “participation as action”.

According to participant narratives, sustained behavioral change in beneficiary participation can only be sustained if change agents are more convergent among themselves.

Conclusion

Despite perceived changes in awareness, knowledge, and behaviors among BAED’s primary and secondary audiences, these changes vary in degrees and do not reflect campaign objectives. IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders exhibited seemingly higher levels compared to the 4P beneficiaries. While the beneficiaries have become aware of the concept of *epal* because of effective recall, there seems to be confusion with regard to the target audience. The campaign slogan *Bawal ang Epal Dito* addresses both politicians and the beneficiaries. Although the BAED campaign disseminated election-oriented information—including information about the right to suffrage—it failed to educate regarding its own program mechanics. In terms of the behavioral changes, beneficiaries reported a higher sense of independence. BAED inspired discussions about the issue of *epal*. However: the campaign failed to maximize use of the GRS.

Due to their level of awareness, knowledge, and their positive change in behavior, IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders are now in a position to help beneficiaries achieve the same changes. The Transtheoretical Model also points to the enhancement of these influentials’ attitudes towards the campaign, which translates to more help for beneficiaries.

An important issue to further discuss is the unintended response from politicians affected by the campaign. The campaign intended to discourage politicians from spreading misinformation. Unfortunately, the campaign instead incited varying levels of animosity from these politicians.

Using the Social Cognitive Theory, the campaign is deemed successful in terms of its use of appropriate channels and its message. The BAED campaign used multiple channels: trimedia, to set the norm about *Bawal ang Epal*; national-scope media; community channels like tarpaulins; and FDS interpersonal channels, including informal communication with parent-leaders and friends. Beneficiaries consider MLs and parent-leaders the main message sources; they are easily relatable, and they explain the campaign as needed.

BAED campaign framing could use further study. While the use of the word *epal* was catchy, the word’s negative connotation antagonized LGU partners who are themselves politicians. *Epal* confused beneficiaries

by engaging politicians with the same message used to engage them. Furthermore, while there are efforts to localize the BAED materials, the word *epal* has no local translations and may be less appealing to beneficiaries in non-Tagalog-speaking areas. Aside from the main message, five (5) sub-messages produced varying levels of reception and understanding from the beneficiaries.

The campaign was not efficient, nor did it engage its target participants. The BAED processes were implemented from the top-down, reaching the key implementers—the IOs and MLs—without baseline research to aid planning.

The concept of change agents highlights the importance of human resources in bringing about behavioral and social change. In BAED's case, empowering IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders to reach technical expertise directly translates to increased grassroots connection, thus enabling DSWD to achieve the campaign goals strategically. DSWD must also creatively engage LGU officials/politicians and other agency-partners in a meaningful partnership.

Recommendations

1. Effectiveness of the Campaign in terms of Awareness, Knowledge, and Behavior

a. Empower the influentials. The next BAED campaign should reinforce existing mechanisms while being mindful of the changes experienced by IOs, MLs, parent-leaders, and beneficiaries. While beneficiaries are aware of BAED, they need information to use GRS and become empowered voters. Knowledgeable IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders, must be properly oriented and armed with the right information to assist beneficiaries. They must be propelled from being implementers of the BAED campaign to genuine advocates of the program. They must be involved in the entire process—planning, implementing (wherein they must be consistently mentored), monitoring, and evaluation—so that they can develop a sense of ownership and feel motivated to communicate campaign messages. Recognizing best practices, fun and recreational activities will encourage IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders to become better influencers of program beneficiaries.

b. Use interpersonal channels. Unburden IOs and MLs by maximizing campaign partner participation. The study reveals the beneficiaries' preference for interpersonal channels to put forward their grievances. This means that the campaign must open more interpersonal channels for the beneficiaries. This means more duties and responsibilities for IOs and MLs who admitted to being overburdened by the campaign. COMELEC and DILG support should be studied to determine how their human resources

can be tapped for the campaign. The BAED campaign may be integrated in voters' education, for example. DILG and DSWD counterparts in the LGUs may also be tapped to become interpersonal channels. DSWD can create a community action team—composed of parent-leaders and other concerned citizens—independent of partisanship and politics to field complaints and respond to *epal* issues. Existing social media and text hotlines serving as mediating channels must be made more personal to appeal to beneficiaries. Mediating channels must be used with caution because many beneficiaries are not literate and may not have easy access to these channels.

c. Increase levels of change among beneficiaries. Recommendations to increase the level of awareness, knowledge, and behaviors of the beneficiaries will be discussed in the next section.

2. Channels and Messages of the Campaign

a. Increase awareness through national media buzz. Future BAED campaigns should continue using TV and radio advertisements and publicities on the national level to set the norm against *epal*. In order to maximize the campaign's presence on national media, a celebrity endorser or high profile personality with whom the beneficiaries can easily relate may be used. However, if hiring a celebrity endorser would incur more expenses, perhaps a creative but on-budget advertisement will do. Student filmmakers make up a pool of creative resources.

b. Support national-level buzz with community channels. The BAED tarpaulins were received well by beneficiaries because the tarpaulins are highly visible in their communities. There was a clamor for more tarpaulins to be situated in strategic locations. Flyers and briefers were also easily recalled, but these may be replaced by more utility-based materials like foldable fans for longer shelf life and better pass-on readability among beneficiaries.

c. Allow message elaboration and persuasion using interpersonal channels. According to beneficiaries, information about BAED was available primarily through the FDS, and informal conversations with IOs, MLs, and parent-leaders.

d. Informal talks allow participants to assess their behavior relative to the behavioral change espoused by the campaign (i.e., using the GRS to report). Therefore: IOs, MLs, parent-leaders, and other potential on-ground partners must be equipped to disseminate and discuss the campaign in detail. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) may be compiled through this interactions, printed, and then disseminated.

e. Use actual GRS cases as testimonials and demonstration. This study reveals a level of skepticism of the GRS channels and processes. This study

may be used to showcase real stories of how complaints were forwarded, processed, and resolved, and to demonstrate that GRS is easy and it works.

f. Communicate a motivation: “What’s in it for me?” The campaign must communicate not only a call to action (to report *epal* cases), but also the benefits of reporting *epal* cases. BAED empowers participants to understand and defend their right as a 4Ps beneficiary, and to continue receiving the benefits of the program. This must be their motive for reporting politicians who threaten to abuse power and violate their rights.

g. Communicate a clear and positive message. The participants of the study noted the unclear perspective of the tagline *Bawal ang Epal Dito*. The tagline must be rewritten to speak directly to beneficiaries themselves.

A negative slant to a campaign message only works in the short term, almost as a shock value. However, negative campaign messages do not foster genuine social or behavioral change. For example: the shock value produced by graphic images on cigarette packaging or anti-smoking posters does not address cigarette addiction.

Perceived as catchy and with effective recall, the negative slant of *Bawal ang Epal* created buzz and raised public awareness of *epal* and its implications to 4Ps and elections; it would then be impractical to do away with this branding. Considering the previous recommendations—to redesign the BAED message to speak directly to program beneficiaries, to retain *epal* in the message, and to translate the tagline into a more positive brand—the tagline should be reworked to something like: “*Isumbong ang epal*” or “*i-report ang epal!*” [Report the *epal*]. Framing the message this way makes it more action-oriented and empowering. The message retains the *epal* recall while clearly addressing beneficiaries.

Moreover, this study recommends that BAED limit its messages. Succeeding campaign messages should follow a message structure that goes: “It is your right, so if threatened, report the *epal*”. Other essential and rights-based messages may be addressed by the larger 4Ps campaign. This way, the key messages are limited and streamlined.

h. Localize the communication materials and messages, including the term “epal” according to communities’ social context.

3. Efficiency and Participation

a. Encourage ownership by Information Officers and Municipal Links of the BAED Campaign. With the knowledge gained from this assessment-research, the BAED campaign may be considered still at its formative stage. This is a good opportunity to involve the IOs and MLs in the re-planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Succeeding BAED campaigns may be jumpstarted with a simple convention or sessions to discuss

campaign reforms. This way, IOs and MLs learn more (and correctly) about the BAED, feel more favorably about it, and lead beneficiaries more effectively.

b. Re-energize partnership with DILG and COMELEC. A media event may gather agency heads and implementers to clarify and even expand roles, and discuss responsibilities and accountabilities.

c. Turn LGU partners/politicians from enemies into partners. The study reveals that politicians provide resources on the ground to help implement 4Ps. They are essentially partners that should not be antagonized. However, the confusing, negative branding of BAED led to reported cases of animosity between LGU officials and IOs/ MLs. Rebranding BAED will revitalize the partnership between LGUs and politicians.

Politicians should not be automatically considered *epals*. Only individuals who sully their reputation must be tagged and shamed to protect the true ideals of service in politics and good governance.

A potentially massive media event such as a convention or series of meetings-orientations will create a venue to discuss rules of engagement, draft implementation guidelines, and produce a signed manifesto of engagement. This way, the previous problem will become an opportunity to market DSWD's campaign and its partner politicians.

d. Invest on research, monitoring, and evaluation, and process documentation. DSWD must realize that research on BAED is also, essentially, research on 4Ps. Documentation is essential while BAED remains in its formative phase.

e. Setting up BAED Community Action Teams. Parent-leaders and other concerned citizens should man a help desk to field complaints, and relay information to a response team. BAED Community Action Teams may also provide security for IOs and MLs being harassed and threatened by abusive politicians.

4. Recommendations on Methods for Future Studies

Since this study is a rapid assessment of a communication campaign, a restrictive timeline necessitated a purely qualitative method of research. Therefore, the narratives and testimonials of the purposively chosen participants of the five FGDs were chosen for depth rather than breadth of data. It is, therefore, recommended that similar future studies use mixed research methods and include generalizable quantitative data to supplement qualitative data.

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