

Serve like Jesus



ANNUAL REPORT

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ABOUT THE COVER

“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20: 28)

Jesus washing the feet of His disciples during the Last Supper was an act of humility. With a towel around his waist and a basin, He offered to do the lowly work of servants, presaging His ultimate act of humility and love on the Cross. The moment, recollected on Maundy Thursday, inspired TSPI’s 41st anniversary theme, “Serve like Jesus,” as TSPI President Rene E. Cristobal enjoined employees.

“After surviving the challenge of the pandemic, by God’s faithfulness, the theme is a timely reminder that we are in TSPI to serve unselfishly,” he said. “We feel God’s love and bear witness to it. So, we pass on the blessing to our fellowmen—selflessly—without expectation. The theme is also a way of reminding and reassuring our clients that we are here to serve them.”

The statue in the cover, created by renowned sculptor Ed Castrillo in 2010, was discovered by TSPI Executive Director Alice Z. Cordero in a cabinet in the basement of the TSPI premises. She brought it out of storage, had it cleaned and displayed as a reminder of one of TSPI’s core values.

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Bringing
Good News
to those in need

A photograph of a modern building with a grey facade and yellow accents. The name "Tulay sa Pag-Unlad Inc." is written in large, yellow, 3D letters on the upper part of the building, with "TSPI" in smaller letters below it. A green plant is visible in the foreground on the left.

Tulay sa Pag-Unlad Inc.
TSPI

ABOUT TSPI

Tulay sa Pag-Unlad, Inc. (TSPI) is a Christian non-stock, non-profit non-government organization (NGO) that pioneered in providing microfinance in the Philippines. It is engaged in social development services in fulfillment of Christ's commission of proclaiming the Good News of His saving grace and kindness to those in the fringes of society.

TSPI works with other institutions to help alleviate poverty by training microentrepreneurs and small farmers to grow and sustain their business and livelihood while nurturing their spiritual wellbeing.

Tulay sa Pag-Unlad (meaning: "bridge to progress") was founded on October 30, 1981 by David Bussau, a successful businessman who established Maranatha Trust to provide small loans to people in the marginalized sector so that they could become entrepreneurs. He also established Opportunity International Australia, which is part of a network of organizations in 22 countries.

Bussau was then also working with the Institute for International Development Incorporated (IIDI), which had the same thrust as Maranatha, and was planning to expand into the Philippines. He and IIDI's executive director Barry Harper were introduced to influential businessmen and bankers, who all desired to improve the lives of underprivileged Filipinos.

In 1982, TSPI received funding from USAID and the Christoffel-Blinden Mission to help enhance its entrepreneurship development program and to assist enterprises that employ the physically disabled, particularly the blind.

TSPI started providing micro-loans and business coaching to small businessmen in Metro Manila that same year.

Inspired by its gospel-driven mission to serve more communities, TSPI formed local partnerships with like-minded groups and individuals, resulting in the rise of six independent provincial microfinance NGO partners across the country.

TSPI spearheaded efforts to set standards for microfinance NGOs to be sustainable. It is a founding member of the two largest microfinance networks in the country—the Alliance of Philippine Partners in Enterprise Development, Inc. (APPEND) and Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI).

Today, TSPI has more than 160,000 microentrepreneurs and 10,000 farmer clients, served through its 120 branches in Metro Manila and 22 provinces in Luzon.

MISSION

To see people live Christ-centered lives with dignity, sufficiency, integrity and hope; and demonstrating these through love and service in their families and communities

VISION

To provide individuals, families, and communities the opportunities to experience fullness of life in Christ through Christian microenterprise development

CORE VALUES



Servanthood

Each one working with a servant heart



Integrity

Each one living a morally upright life



Stewardship

Each one taking responsibility as a faithful steward



Excellence

Each one working for the glory of God



WHERE WE ARE



MESSAGE

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

ATTY. LAMBERTO L. MEER
Chairman

Unique service driven by our connection to God, love for one another

On TSPI's 38th anniversary in 2019, I had a vision. We in TSPI were all crossing the Pasig River, not in the safety and convenience of a ferry, but half-swimming while clutching at a thick rope stretched across the water. Through the slow and precarious process, we stayed together, looking after one another until each one made it safely to the other side.

In hindsight, the vision seemed to presage the unprecedented events of the next two years, when we soldiered on during the pandemic and, by God's faithfulness, survived. There could not have been a more momentous time to praise and thank God for our deliverance than our 40th anniversary in 2021.

As the preceding years have shown, the past four decades have not always been easy. Before the pandemic, there was the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis. The organization also went through an internal crisis as to its role, and the mission was challenged. Yet by God's leading, the organization remained true to its mission until present – providing holistic service for the less privileged through its Transformation Framework.

Given the occasional humps and bumps that disrupted our operations, I would liken our experience to a roller-coaster ride: the trajectory is not constant, sometimes it goes up, sometimes down.

But it's been exciting! Why? Because God is never boring. So long as we depend on Him,

consult Him daily, and we are anchored to Him in complete faith and trust, He will take care of us. "Because You are my help, I sing in the shadow of Your wings. I cling to You; Your right hand upholds me." (Psalm 63:7-8)

I believe that what sustains us through our difficulties is our relationships, in communion with God's salvific love. That is what makes TSPI unique. We're all about relationships because that's who God is: LOVE.

God gathered together select individuals to serve Him through this organization. Coming from different backgrounds, we bring our skills, charisms, and ways of doing things. Being human, we don't always see eye-to-eye. But when we pray together, such as during our annual retreats, the Holy Spirit enters our hearts and like a conductor, unifies the discordant notes of disagreement and sets our thoughts and ideas in tune with our Lord Jesus Christ.

That our board membership is ecumenical makes for enriching interaction. I marvel at how God uses this group of men and women with different ideas and persuasions as channels for bringing about what He wants to achieve. Listening to and learning from one another is like looking at life through different lenses and seeing a brighter, richer vista.

One of our requirements for potential board members is a commitment to join us at least once

a year, when we get together, pray, and listen together, and simply be on the same page, responding to God.

We have had legends in the board—like the late Washington SyCip, Gov. Dodoy Villareal and Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez, my father-in-law; and Mrs. Diana Negroponte, wife of former US Ambassador John Negroponte (who must have had to ask permission from the US State Department to join a Philippine NGO). From them I learned a lot about group dynamics, how to chair a meeting, when to keep quiet and just listen and when to be firm and use one's authority.

Each of our executive directors has brought in their unique strengths and weaknesses. So much so that the term of each one has been a milestone. This brings to mind the parable of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. The Apostles brought to Jesus what they had and Jesus multiplied them to feed thousands. Remember that it is God who is working in our lives and those of our beneficiaries.

Our current executive director, Alice Z. Cordero, who joined TSPI in 2019, has been a fast learner and a real blessing. She was unaccustomed to the NGO environment, coming from the corporate world, but I believe that when she connected to the Lord, it was a watershed moment.

It has been a joy and a privilege to work in TSPI! I am forever grateful for God's invitation to join it in 1984 through a friend. The then-executive director told me TSPI needed a lawyer and a corporate secretary. I did not know anything about TSPI then but I welcomed the opportunity to help the poor and show my love for God because He has blessed me and my family. Entering TSPI came naturally because I have nurtured a love for helping the poor since my grade school years. As a member of the Ateneo Catechetical Instruction League, I would go to a public school in Marikina to teach the pupils about God through Bible parables. I enjoyed the time I spent with the children.

I also belong to the Ligaya ng Panginoon Catholic charismatic community. We reach out to slum dwellers, guiding their spiritual formation, providing medical assistance and aid during

emergencies and calamities. We also minister to the youth, providing school needs, like uniforms and allowance, for some 800 scholars. It's quite fulfilling.

I remain hopeful for a better future for them. Some of us maybe disappointed with the current situation of the country, but we need to see with spiritual eyes and experience miracles happening all around us. We should pray for our leaders, so that they will allow themselves to be touched by God.

As for TSPI, I sometimes wonder what it would be like in the next 40 years. As the organization began its fifth decade, we welcomed four new young members of the Board of Trustees. We will continue building the next generation of servant leaders who will ensure that TSPI will carry on its mission of transforming lives centered on Christ.

We are confident of this because our true Chairman of the Board is God. Unlike in other organizations, our Chairman does not rally us to be successful; He calls us only to be faithful to Him and that's all He asks of us. Each and every member of the TSPI family—from the Board of Trustees to the Senior Management Team, employees and clients—is a gift from God and to one another.

Now a year shy of my own 40th anniversary in TSPI, I hold on to thoughts of God's reassurance: People can come and go but the Holy Spirit is constant, the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness"

Lamentations 3:22-23

A portrait of Rene E. Cristobal, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a white collared shirt. He is looking slightly to the right with a gentle expression. The background is a light blue map of the Philippines.

MESSAGE

FROM THE PRESIDENT

RENE E. CRISTOBAL
President

Love like Jesus, Serve like Jesus

In Matthew 22:39, Jesus summed up the law and commandments in two statements: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength; and to love your neighbor as yourself.”

We all want comfortable lives for ourselves and our families. This same aspiration, if we follow what Jesus taught us in the Gospel of Matthew, should also extend to those outside our circles and echo chambers because everyone—each child of God—has the right to live a decent life with dignity and love for God and others, as well.

When I first joined the TSPI Board of Trustees in 2000, I had one thing on my mind: how can we show God’s love to others, help them live a life of dignity and love for God, and empower them to share this same love to their communities?

Our goal in TSPI is to extend financial support to farmers and microentrepreneurs so that they can have a sustainable livelihood and a life of dignity, for themselves and their families. We complement financial support with financial literacy and probity.

Over and above this, as we guide our beneficiaries in running their business, we disciple them. We help them to grow in faith and obedience to God’s commandments and to develop a deeper relationship with God as well as their families and communities.

With economic sufficiency, business competency, and relational maturity, they experience fullness of life in Christ and manifest this through the love and service they give to their families and communities.

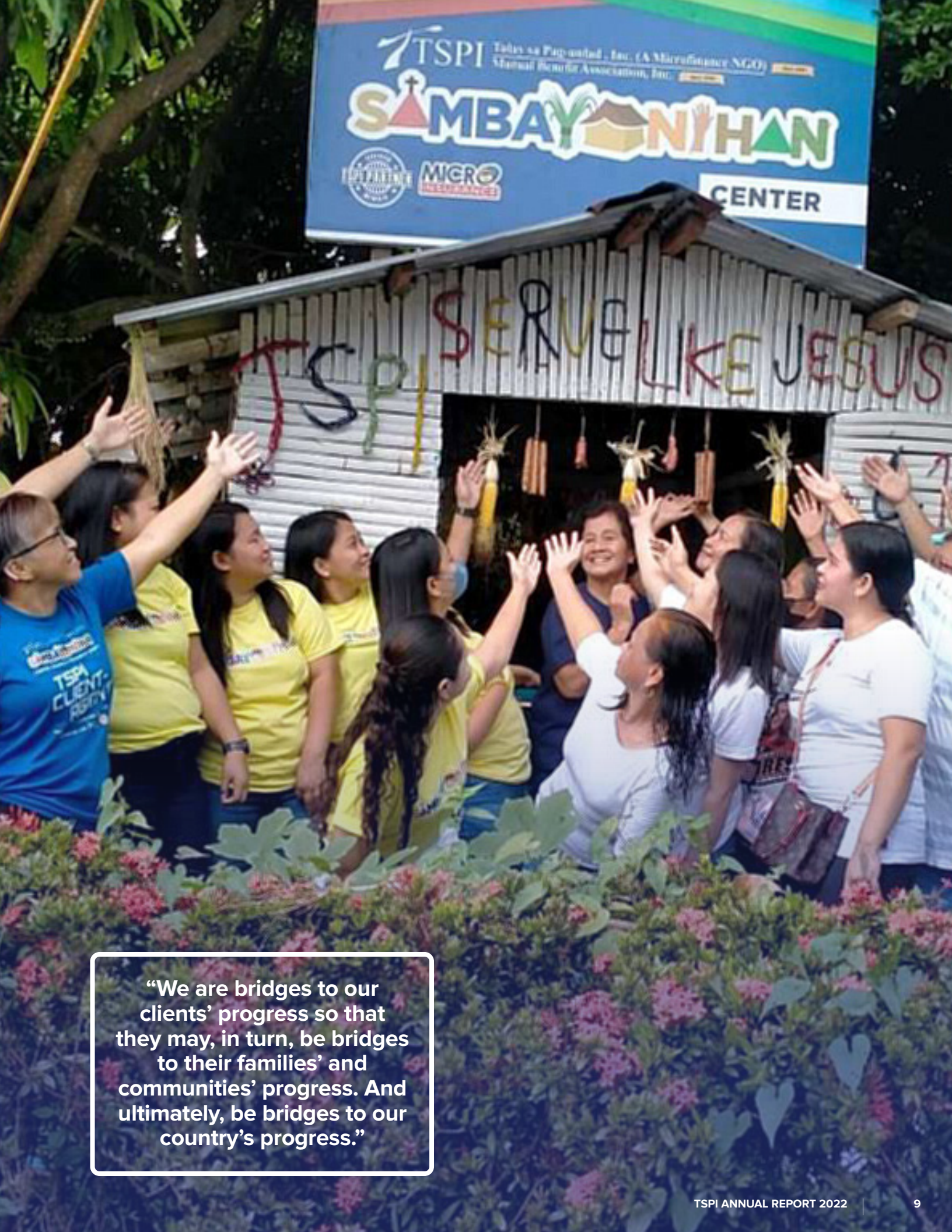
This is the essence of the TSPI Transformation Framework, the foundation of our work, which puts God at the center of our activities and our lives as well as those of our clients. Ultimately, we hope to develop God-fearing and socially responsible microentrepreneurs and farmers by promoting our core values of stewardship, integrity, servanthood, and excellence.

From this framework sprang the idea of Sambayanihan. It is where love and worship is demonstrated through our programs and services. We want more people to experience fullness of life in Christ through Christian microenterprise development. And always under the banner of love.

The love of Jesus. This is the reason why we in TSPI continue to do what we do and why we continue to serve like Jesus. We in TSPI feel and bear witness to God’s unconditional, transforming love. We share this same love by serving others—our colleagues, clients and the communities—selflessly.

TSPI is a nonprofit organization. We are in the business of transforming lives. Our profit is intangible: It is when individuals become empowered to be change agents in their communities.

This is what “Tulay Sa Pag-Unlad” really means: We are bridges to our clients’ progress so that they may, in turn, be bridges to their families’ and communities’ progress. And ultimately, be bridges to our country’s progress.



“We are bridges to our clients’ progress so that they may, in turn, be bridges to their families’ and communities’ progress. And ultimately, be bridges to our country’s progress.”

2022: A YEAR OF HUMILITY, SERVICE AND INNOVATION

The 2022 Management Report

TSPI's remarkable declaration of soaring with a faithful God on its fourth decade in service became the springboard for this year's deliberate organization's action: to serve like Jesus. The paradox of servant-leadership—aspiring for greatness while maintaining a humble, servant mindset—can only be grasped if we understand what ultimately moved Jesus to serve. In the same breath, an organization like TSPI can celebrate its great accomplishments in microfinance, and yet still be known more for its humble vision and mandate to see people live Christ-centered lives being demonstrated through love and service in their families and communities.

The year 2022 set TSPI to become a game changer in innovation as it devotedly serves its clients and employees through conventional and cutting-edge methodologies. The Sambayanihan Program, which sustained the spirit of compassion and collaboration among clients and employees is one of these conventional avenues. Meanwhile, the advent of new technologies for microfinance services has made it easier for us to carry out our work more efficiently and effectively. The combination of these methodologies—orthodox and contemporary—is what fuels TSPI to serve like Jesus, with a true desire to provide individuals, families and communities to experience the fullness of life in Christ.

Financial Performance

TSPI's financial performance for 2022 mirrored these encouraging results with a monthly gross financial income aggregating to P458 million, with

a P41-million increase from 2021's P303 million.


As of December 2022, TSPI has P1.5 billion in Total Assets against P1.4 billion in the previous year. This is comprised primarily of Total Loan Receivables of P882 million. TSPI's Total Liabilities amounting to P849 million had P589 million in client micro-savings, increasing by P31 million from 2021. This reflects clients' resolve to demonstrate the values of good stewardship and financial resilience.

TSPI's Fund Balance in 2022 stood at P604 million, a P27-million increase from P577 million in 2021. The Fund Balance was comprised of P395 million from Accumulated Net Income, P130 million from Retirement Employee Benefit Reserve, and a reevaluation increment on property of P79 million.

Self-sufficiency ratios also significantly improved in 2022. From a financial Self-Sufficiency Score of 96 percent, and an Operational Self-Sufficiency Score of 113 percent in 2021, the organization achieved, respectively, a 109 percent and 106.78 percent score in 2022. Total Loan Releases for 2022 hit P2.74 billion, a remarkable increase of P67 million from P2.07 billion in 2021. TSPI was able to touch the lives of 160,069 clients.

The Seed: Humility and Initiative

The biblical scene of Jesus washing His disciples' feet is one of the prime examples of humility and servant-leadership. The disciples booked a room at an inn for the Passover forgot to employ a servant to wash their feet at the door. This was a custom in their time. When the disciples realized the servant was missing, none of them



volunteered to take on what they deemed was a job beneath their station. When he observed this, Jesus, after supper, stripped down to a garment around his waist, took a basin of water and began washing His disciples' feet. It was a lesson of unconditional love, service, humility and compassion.

To serve like Jesus is to intentionally observe the needs of others, and take initiative to address them. After all, neither position nor skill is a pre-requisite to show genuine care for others. In TSPI, its Sambayanihan Program has provided an avenue to demonstrate humble, yet impactful service among employees and clients. With our branches' initiatives to identify the needs in various communities such as livelihood training, health awareness, leadership training, and food security, among others; TSPI has become instrumental in organizing "Tulay Iskolar" Trainings, "Kamalayan sa Kalusugan ng Komunidad" (K3), "Debosyon kay Kristo" (leadership training), "Urban Gulayan", and the like.

It is our hope that through implementation of these social development services, TSPI servant-leaders could impart the humble spirit of service to our clients, their families and communities. During the organization's 41st anniversary celebration, client-leaders had unique initiatives to serve like Jesus. The activities conducted in their Sambayanihan Centers were fellowships facilitated by ministry partners, feeding activities, clean-up drives, gift-giving and bible-giving drives, zumba classes, and many more.

Consequently, one of TSPI's senior citizen clients was also honored by the Coalition of Services for the Elderly (COSE) as a Sampung Ulirang Nakatatanda (SUN) awardee. Sabiana Del Rosario has been serving humbly and gratefully serving

others for nearly five decades as a barangay paramedic, expecting nothing in return.

To work with a servant heart requires the virtue of humility. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "Humility is the mother of all virtues. It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted and ardent." Undeniably, serving like Jesus is not a strategy or a style but a way of life, a natural consequence of our letting Him into our lives. Humility is one of the foundational components of TSPI's core values.

The Fruit: Innovation and Synergy

Founded under the banner of service, TSPI is geared towards creating more beneficial and lasting innovations that would better serve its clients. Jesus was a creative servant-leader. As such, we continuously seek creative and more efficient ways that are appropriate and relevant to the changing needs of the time. If Jesus was with us physically today, He would be adapting and maximizing technological advancements to His advantage to be able to reach more people.

He would be encouraging more collaborations with different groups of people for a common good. Undoubtedly, it must be divine intervention that like-minded institutions and organizations, partnered with TSPI to be one with our holistic goal of bringing good news and hope to communities.

Following Jesus' example, TSPI foresaw the impact of technology in providing more efficient services to our clients. Hence, in the early 2000s, we implemented TSPI TxtBilis, an SMS platform that allows our agents and clients to more efficiently record and monitor credit-in and client payments. In recognizing the value of new technologies and innovations, we have been able to reach more clients, support their businesses, and create and nurture more



Newly certified TSPI client-agents pose for a photo at the TSPI Lingayen Branch Office.

collaborative partnerships with them and with other organizations. Over the years, as TSPI progressed into digital platforms, TxtBilis was redeveloped as the TSPI Agent Account System (TAAS), a homegrown platform that has been embraced by many clients and branch employees. Clients experience hassle-free payment transactions for quick loan releasing. TSPI client-agents are also empowered to serve their co-members in facilitating the collection of their payments through the use of this application while enjoying the income-generating benefit of the payment service.

The Sambayanihan Center Business Program (SCBP) for microentrepreneurs, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Makati (RCM) and Standard Chartered Bank (SCB), has continually empowered TSPI client-agents by providing the 105 beneficiaries with business kits that include smartphones, and organize regular capacity-building webinars. The program has greatly upgraded the digital business operations and sustained livelihood of the beneficiaries.

The Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI) provided initial funding for our digitalization initiative, TSPI CLICK! (Check Loan Insurance and CBU Kaagad), a mobile app which aims to provide clients with real-time online access to information about their loan transactions, micro-savings balance and microinsurance payments.

MCPI also spearheaded the Digital Financial Inclusion Awards (DFIA) program to strengthen financial inclusion through the digitalization of the microfinance sector. This program is funded by Citi Group and supported by Bangko

Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). During the awards ceremony, three TSPI clients were recognized in using digital solutions in their businesses namely: Jeriel Gelito, a tech-savvy rice farmer who adopted digital platforms to sell his agricultural produce, and has GCash and PayMaya e-loading and remittance business; Marilyn Mendoza Centeno, a TSPI client-agent who started her direct selling and buy-and-sell business on social media; and Ma. Hazel Vitamog, who decided to turn her love for cooking into a business, marketing her home-cooked food online.

TSPI also collaborated with Iskaparate.com, the marketplace buy-and-sell website for Filipino microentrepreneurs in selling their products to help them grow their businesses. TSPI held the first “Buy-anihan sa Pagtutulongan” client orientation led by Iskaparate representatives and was attended by over 100 TSPI clients around Luzon. The participants were taught how to register on the e-commerce platform of Iskaparate.

This synergy with technology is expected to flourish even more in the near future. TSPI is getting ready for more vibrant alliances with other organizations with similar advocacies.

Humility, Innovation, Initiative, Synergy. These are foundational components of our core values of Servanthood, Integrity, Stewardship and Excellence.

As we selflessly serve others; we take initiative to find and execute innovative and lasting solutions that will bring about excellent results; all with the help and support of our partners, clients, colleagues and stakeholders.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

2022 MICROFINANCE OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2021	2022
Total Assets	P1.36 billion	P1.45 billion
Total Portfolio	P906 million	P1.01 billion
Loans Released	P 2.07 billion	P2.74 billion
Outreach <i>(Active Clients: good and PAR clients, savers, and resting)</i>	189,882	160,069
Male	32,304	22,078
Female	157,578	137,991
Financial Self-Sufficiency	96%	109%
Operational Self-Sufficiency	113%	106.78%
Net (Loss)/Income	(P78.92 million)	P13.127 million
Branches	120	119

LIVELIHOOD LOAN PROGRAMS

(AS OF DECEMBER 2022)

LOAN PROGRAMS	AMOUNT OF LOAN RELEASE (P'000)	LOAN PORTFOLIO (P'000)
TSPI Kabuhayan Program (TKP)	P2,560,373	P896,919
TSPI Maunlad Program (TMP)	P1,782	P5,190
TSPI Programang Pang-agrikultura (TPP)	P40,599	P10,568
Total	P2,602,714	P912,677

SOCIAL WELFARE LOAN PROGRAMS

(AS OF DECEMBER 2022)

LOAN PROGRAMS	AMOUNT OF LOAN RELEASE (P'000)	LOAN PORTFOLIO (P'000)
Home Improvement and Sanitation	P112,457	P86,438
Healthcare	P1,268	P384
Educational	P23,306	P7,840
Total	P137,031	P94,662



TSPI client-agents prepare vegetables for planting, a Sambayanihan Center activity.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

TSPI offers a broad range of financial and social services programs which integrate spiritual values formation as well as financial literacy and livelihood skills development. The programs are designed to equip clients to become God-fearing and socially responsible microentrepreneurs. In the process, solidarity and collective responsibility are also instilled among them.

Livelihood Loan Programs

Serve as financial tools that support the sustainability and growth of clients' microenterprises and farm production activities that enable them to maximize business opportunities.



TSPI KABUHAYAN PROGRAM (TKP) is a livelihood assistance program that provides collateral-free loans of up to P50,000, payable in three to six months on a weekly basis. Members are also provided with microinsurance benefits and access to other loan programs such as healthcare, education, and housing and sanitation.



TSPI MAUNLAD PROGRAM (TMP) is a loan program offered to microentrepreneurs who have higher capital requirements. It is open to both existing TKP clients and new clients with businesses that have been continuously operating for at least two years and a business capital of at least P60,000. TMP offers loans ranging from P 50,000 to P300,000, payable in three to 24 months. Collateral is required only for loans above P100,000.



TSPI PROGRAMANG PANG-AGRIKULTURA (TPP) is an agriculture lending program that offers production loans for rice, corn, and high-value crops. It provides small farmers with more affordable funds for the cost of farming inputs and labor up to P200,000 for a maximum of five hectares. Aside from microinsurance and crop insurance, they also have access to other loan programs for water pump installation, healthcare, housing and sanitation, and other agri-related livelihood activities.

Special Business Loan Programs

TSPI CREDIT LINE FACILITY allows eligible clients to avail additional loans over an extended period of time rather than re-apply each time they need funding. This is mostly useful for operating purposes, especially for any business experiencing sharp fluctuations in their cash flows and some unexpected large expenses. The loan has a one-year credit term.

COVID-19 RECOVERY PROGRAM is a special business loan for female TMP clients aged 35 years and below whose livelihoods were affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Clients are expected to implement business ideas that are realigned with growth opportunities under the “new normal”, and must have a working capital of at least P60,000. TSPI also provides them capacity-building to help grow their businesses.

Social Loan Programs

help our clients address the basic needs of their household. They also contribute to higher productivity and protect clients' capital for livelihood through access to other financial facilities for their non-business related needs.



HOME IMPROVEMENT AND SANITATION PROGRAM (HISP)

is a loan facility for housing and toilet improvement, water source installation and electrical connection. Loan amount ranges depending on the available maximum exposure per program payable in six months to three years.



EDUCATIONAL LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

offers loans for any school-related expenses of clients' children who are in pre-elementary to post-graduate level. The amount of loan depends on the educational level, at a maximum of P20,000 payable in three to six months, with a weekly repayment schedule. Special training courses for clients and immediate family members can also be covered by this program.



HEALTHCARE LOAN PROGRAM

is offered to clients in partnership with PhilHealth through its program for organized groups. This gives members and their dependents access to personal healthcare services. Clients have the option to pay their health insurance premium through TSPI, either in the form of cash deposit, withdrawal of capital build-up (CBU) or loan payable up to six months, with weekly repayment.



LIFE INSURANCE AND CREDIT LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Microinsurance services are offered to our employees, members, and their immediate families through TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. to help cushion the effects of disability or death of family members.

TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORK

Touchstone for change, with God at the center

TSPI attributes the success of its mission to uplift lives through microentrepreneurship development to its Transformation Framework, which puts God at the center of its activities and the lives of its employees, members, and clients.

The organization enables the poor to become financially self-sufficient and to live with dignity while growing spiritually and developing a deeper relationship with God as well as their family and community. It aims to develop God-fearing and socially responsible microentrepreneurs and farmers by promoting its core values of stewardship, integrity, servanthood and excellence.

Alice Z. Cordero, TSPI executive director and president and CEO of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (MBAI) explained the Transformation Framework in her speech, “Breaking the Cycle of Poverty,” at the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX) General Membership meeting on May 26, 2022.

The framework starts with giving the poor access to loans so that they can achieve economic efficiency. “Through their loans they are able to save, they are able to have access to our microinsurance products, and along the way, we make sure that we develop our client competency,” she said.

She underscored the importance of financial literacy in the framework, as she expressed

gratitude to FINEX Foundation for collaborating with TSPI on this aspect, through the Basic Financial Literacy Program. “We teach them business skills, and at the end of the day, they learn decision-making,” she said. “We teach clients to regularly save a portion of their livelihood income.”

TSPI clients learn to embrace credit discipline, savings discipline, and the ethical values of doing business. “What is more important is that they build a deeper relationship with God, family and community,” she continued.

Since its founding in 1981, TSPI has released a total of P130 billion in loans to clients in four million households. Of these clients, over 90 percent are women microentrepreneurs, the remaining 10 percent are farmers and Indigenous Peoples.

Its microinsurance arm, TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI) has paid P615 million in insurance claims, served five million members enrolled and 400 million beneficiaries over the course of 17 years.

Of their client base, 75 percent have savings of up to P10,000; one now has P200,000, she stated.

All of these we do with God in the center of our lives and our projects. We are very proud that we in TSPI and our clients are God-fearing, and we believe that social responsibility, through microentrepreneurship given to our farmers

will really uplift the people who need help out of poverty.

The four elements of the Transformation Framework are economic sufficiency, client competency, financial probity and relational maturity.

Economic Sufficiency

Clients are given access to sustainable livelihood loan programs through microloans, microsavings, and microinsurance and other basic services such as healthcare and housing to help them attain financial stability. Credit policies and processes are aligned to better fit clients' financial capacity and loan requirements.

Client Competency

Capacity-building programs are organized to enhance client's financial literacy, business skills and decision-making capability. TSPI offers clients information on livelihood opportunities. During the pandemic, TSPI conducted webinars on direct selling and managing sari-sari stores and introduced urban vegetable gardening in Metro Manila to ensure food security.

Financial Probity

Lending programs are integrated with values formation as well as safety nets and food security programs to establish clients' financial probity. The clients learn to develop credit and savings discipline and ethical values in conducting business. Field staff are

trained to coach clients on the judicious use of their savings and to explain to them the value of healthcare and life insurance.

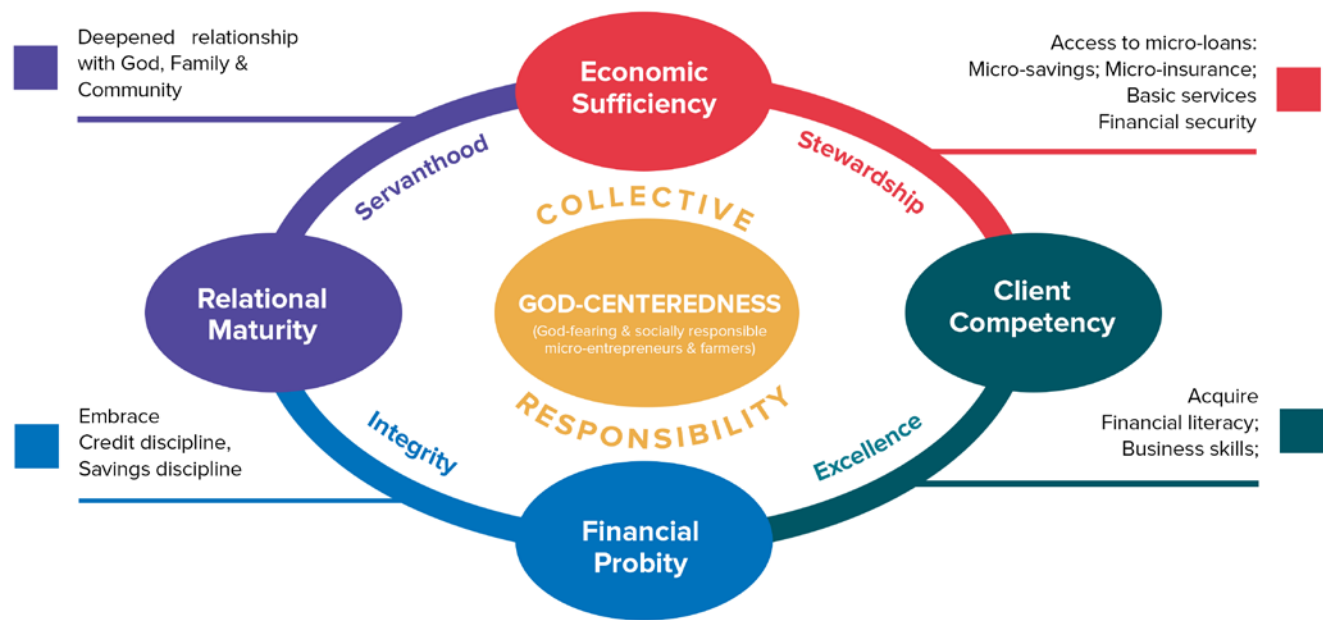
Relational Maturity

Discipleship programs are designed to deepen clients' relationship with God, family, and community and demonstrate it through love and service. With the widespread use of social media, especially during the pandemic, Bible verses and prayers are regularly shared through Facebook and online chat groups. This is in addition to the online weekly morning devotion and discipleship webinars.

The impact of the Transformation Framework on the lives of clients, their families and communities is what drives the sustainability of TSPI's programs and services.



TSPI Transformation Framework



Transformation in Action





Children of TSPI clients under TSPI Tabaco City Branch, Albay receive school supplies during Project Elisha, a Sambayanihan center activity.



TSPI: Helping families throughout the generations

In a developing country like the Philippines, most Filipinos living in rural areas support themselves by growing their own crops and raising livestock. Passed on from one generation to the next, it is acknowledged as a major contributor to the socioeconomic life in rural areas.

Equally important are the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) such as sari-sari stores, online retail, and other home-based businesses, which make up a large chunk of the million or so businesses operating in the country.

The families of Feliza Bautista-Cariño, 83, of Mangaldan, Pangasinan, and Rosenda Filipino-Cabral, 71, of Indang, Cavite, belong to these sectors. They are engaged in farming, as well as home-based enterprises.

Notwithstanding their diligence and dedication, they occasionally encounter problems such as increases in production costs, or tight competition. Fortunately for them, they can count on a constant in their lives: TSPI and its subsidiary, TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBI) have been coming through for them through the years, through the generations.



The Cariños: Three generations of women entrepreneurs

Nanay Feliza sells vegetables from the family farm. She was 66 years old when TSPI Mangaldan Branch was opened. It was there that she learned how TSPI offered loans without collateral and at the lowest interest rate. She would have applied, except that at her age, she was no longer qualified. Instead, she recommended TSPI to her three daughters and a daughter-in-law who, in turn, encouraged her two children. All of them are currently clients.

Her eldest daughter, Alma Cariño-Laguardia, is a vegetable grower and retailer. She has been a TSPI member since December 2000.

Alma has taken out loans to support the family's livestock and vegetable production, attracted by TSPI's low interest rates and flexible borrowing terms. She says TSPI also "greatly helped in sending the children to college through education loans."

Under its Educational Assistance Program, TSPI offers loans for any type of school-related expenses of clients' children who are in pre-elementary to post-graduate level. The loan amount depends on the educational level, at a maximum of P20,000 payable in three to six months, with a weekly repayment schedule. Special training courses for clients and immediate family members can also be covered by this program.

For these reasons, she says their family has remained loyal to TSPI.

Another daughter, Rebecca Cariño-Mangonon, used to have a lending business, but eventually discontinued it after joining TSPI. Noting the difference in the loan transactions, she remarked, "Walang nababawas sa pera mo (nothing is deducted from your money)."

A TSPI member since May 2003, Rebecca concentrates on running the family's one-hectare farm and its businesses such as rice retailing, hog raising, and meat vending. She had taken out a loan for hog fattening, and learned that she could get a bigger loan even without collateral. What encouraged her to join was the microinsurance, having seen the benefits another center member received from an insurance claim.

With TSPI loan programs, clients are covered with microinsurance and have regular savings through a weekly capital build-up contribution.

Rebecca's younger sister Purita Cariño-Caluya, is into rice retailing and dressmaking while another sister, Gina Cariño-Ventura, owns a sari-sari store. Both have been members since July 2003.

Nanay Feliza's daughter-in-law Juanita Noriega was a member from 2003 to 2017, then worked abroad for two years and upon returning, rejoined TSPI. She and her three

children are engaged in online selling of food, clothing and beauty products.

Juanita and daughter Angeline Noriega-Posadas, (member since January 2020) took out a loan when they started selling online during the pandemic. Angeline used to sell her merchandise from home or bring them to her buyers' houses. Juanita's two other children are also in the business.

The family has also tapped twice into the Home Improvement and Sanitation Loan Program, a loan facility for housing and toilet improvement, water source installation and electrical connection fee. The loan amount depends on the available maximum exposure per program payable from six months to three years.

Besides the low interest rate, Angeline notes that through her loans, she "can save even without going to the bank," referring to her capital build-up contribution. "I was surprised I already had P24,000!" she exclaims.

Asked how else TSPI could assist her family, Rebecca at first thinks of getting another livestock loan. In general, she says, she's satisfied with the benefits she and her family enjoy, reiterating that their savings are untouched.





The Cabrals: All in the family

Like Nanay Feliza, it was Nanay Rosenda, of Indang, Cavite, who convinced her family to look into TSPI programs because she believed it would help their businesses. Not only could they increase their earnings, they could also avail of other products such as Housing Loan and Livestock Loan Program for hog-fattening. The latter program addresses the needs of clients engaged in hog-raising, offering individual loans for such purposes as purchase of piglets and feeds.

The Cabrals were eager to see the outcome of their hard work. They also believed that being TSPI members would give them peace of mind because of the TSPI MBI Kaagapay Insurance products that they availed of.

Nanay Rosenda learned about TSPI in 2007 through an orientation on the organization and its products and services. She wanted to start a business, so she took out a P5,000 loan and opened her sari-sari store. Now she no longer depends too much on her children.

Aside from housing and livestock loans, she has also availed of the general loan, education loan, and multipurpose loan. She also has a Kaagapay Golden Life Insurance Plan (GLIP),

an optional plan available to senior citizen holders of the Basic Life Insurance Plan (BLIP), with a premium of P10,850, payable in 10 years, and coverage up to age 100.

“The programs and the insurance benefits are good. I explained them all to my children,” she says. “I never had any problems repaying. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, I easily met my loan obligations.”

Her eldest, Leonardo, has been a TSPI member since February 2012. His business is hog slaughtering. He has availed of a general loan, hog-fattening and multipurpose loans, and is also Kaagapay-insured.

Nanay Rosenda’s second child, Juanita Cabral-Rollon, her husband, and her daughter are insured under the Kaagapay Basic Life Insurance Plan (BLIP), a mandatory insurance with a premium of P240 per annum. As such, her family received benefits when Juanita passed away in 2020.

Under BLIP, members have equity value equivalent to P120 or 50% of the premium. It provides cover for death, accidental death, accidental, permanent and total

dismemberment or disability for members and their qualified dependents.

Nerissa Angat-Cabral, wife of Nanay Rosenda's son Jaime, also took out a P5,000 loan for her buy-and-sell and clothing business. She wanted to earn so she could contribute more to the household budget. Working as an on-call cook for a catering service did not bring steady, substantial income.

A TSPI member since December 2007, Nerissa has also availed of various loans and Kaagapay insurance. Jaime is a more recent member.

"TSPI gave us opportunities for financial improvement like TESDA skills and livelihood training," she says. "I also urged my children so they could have savings and we could grow our small business."

Her daughters, Jelean Mhae and Jessa Mhae, who are engaged in online and buy-and-sell businesses, are also TSPI members.

"I was convinced to join TSPI because I saw how it helped my grandmother, mother, and aunt," says Jelean. She was thinking of starting a small home-based buy-and-sell business through a P5,000 loan.

Nanay Rosenda's other son Ronald, and his wife Emilia, have both been members since July 2018. Emilia is also into online selling.

Lilia Cabral-Malimban, 38, Nanay Rosenda's fifth child, has been a TSPI member since 2012. She used to run several businesses: e-loading, direct selling, and a backyard piggery. Encouraged by her mother and sister's TSPI experience, she got an initial loan of P7,000 and started a new business.

"I shifted to frozen foods because it is brisk business," Lilia explains. "My business flourished, and I was able to help my family financially. If not for the loan, I would have relied on my husband's income."

In time, Lilia also discovered the many other ways by which TSPI helps people, including free livelihood and skills training from TESDA (Technical Education and Skills Development



Authority). She even took the TSPI-TESDA Hilot Wellness Massage Training.

Lilia attests to the efficiency and effectiveness of TSPI programs in training members to handle money well. "Members are taught to add to their savings every time they have a little surplus, so that in times of need, they have enough for repayment," she said. Her trust in TSPI was so strong, that she was also able to convince other relatives to sign up.

And if ever there are problems, members are able to find a solution. "We always help one another in times of need)," Lilia said.

"Love your people. We should value everyone who supports us, and one of them is Tulay sa Pag-Unlad,"

Mila Hiyas

Mila Hiyas

A miracle of Innovation and gem of perseverance

“UNLAD”.

The word itself means, “progress”, but can also be an acronym for “Unahin natin lagi ang Diyos”. This is the most important lesson to remember during a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, according to TSPI client Milagros “Mila” Hiyas.

Putting God first ensures progress. Mila bore witness to this at the 2022 annual conference of the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI), attended by some 600 participants from microfinance institutions, government organizations, investors, and development organizations.

With the theme “Microfinance: Thriving Through Uncertainties,” Mila shared her experience coping with various challenges, and the support services that enabled her to become more resilient and sustainable.

Put God first

“There will be moments when we might become dispirited, demoralized, so we need to look to God first. I believe that He will not put us in a challenging situation that we cannot overcome,” Mila said during the closing plenary.

Mila, a TSPI client from the TSPI Siniloan Branch since 2010, co-owns Rattan Handicrafts and Bamboo House with her husband, Isagani. Starting in 1993 with small items like rattan baskets, rocking chairs and baby hammocks, the business eventually added big products to their list like sofas and dining tables.

Their first challenge came in 2019 when the government banned logging and the digging of tree roots to mitigate flooding and soil erosion. It affected their operations: their earnings dropped.



The following year, COVID-19 struck. Lockdowns forced many businesses to close. The couple feared for their modest outfit and the workers and their families who depended on it, if it reached the point where they, too, would have to cease operations.

Their shop remained open, but no customers came. “Furniture-making is not considered essential,” she conceded.

Don’t be afraid to innovate

It was also during the height of the pandemic that Mila learned she was qualified for a P50,000 financial assistance from the COVID-19 Rehabilitation Support Program of MCPI, in partnership with TSPI.

Assured of financial assistance, Mila and Isagani came upon an ingenious, inspired idea. They decided to manufacture the bahay kubo.



They could not have thought of a more iconic product. With hospitals filled beyond capacity, their version of bahay kubo could serve as a quarantine facility. It would have a bedroom and toilet and could be set up in the backyard.

Initially, they built four units and displayed two each in Mabitac and Pila, with a fervent prayer that they would attract potential buyers.

Their prayers were answered the next day: all four units were sold! They went full-blast into building more, mobilizing their 22 workers, and even hiring five more when orders steadily increased. “I am deeply grateful to TSPI and MCPI,” she said.

Value people

Asked what other forms of support she needed to continue thriving even during uncertain times, Mila said that she wants to explore marketing and promotions online. She specified ISKAPARATE.com, an online platform with which TSPI has a partnership. It provides online selling support, training, and entrepreneurial guidance to further grow users’ business.

On March 16, 2022, TSPI held the first “Buy-anihan sa Pagtutulungan” client orientation led by Iskaparate President and COO Josefina Natividad, and attended by over 100 TSPI clients from around

Luzon. The participants were taught how to register on the Iskaparate e-commerce platform.

Mila also shared the other lessons in resilience that the pandemic highlighted.

“Be keen to spot opportunity amid trying circumstances,” she said. This means identifying what would be useful or have the potential to be viable. At the same time, one should look at other types of businesses.

“Just keep trying until you hit the right one. Your most important capital is hard work and perseverance,” she said.

“Love your people. We should value everyone who supports us, and one of them is Tulay sa Pag-Unlad,” she added. With TSPI’s trust, she is able to continue taking out loans to boost her business.

Diamonds are formed when carbon is placed under immense pressure for long periods of time. Milagros Hiyas, whose name literally means, “miracle gem”, is a true diamond. She has lived up to that name because of her unwavering faith, the constant support of TSPI and her loved ones, and her own undying perseverance.

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR CLIENT AWARDEES OF

1ST DIGITAL FINANCIAL
INCLUSION AWARDS

TSPI clients among 'champions' in the digital economy

JERIEL GELITO

ANTIPOLLO BRANCH, QUEZON

MARILYN CENTENO

MANGALDAN BRANCH, PANGASINAN

MA. HAZEL VITAMOG

CABUGAO BRANCH, ILOCOS NORTE

Three TSPI clients were among the 24 microentrepreneurs who were named Digital Champions in the first Digital Financial Inclusion Awards (DFIA) presented by the Microfinance Council of the Philippines (MCPI) at a virtual event on December 6, 2022. The awards recognize microbusinesses that have adopted digital solutions and thrive in the digital economy.

Marilyn Centeno, Jeriel Gelito and Ma. Hazel Vitamog each received laptops and P100,000 in cash to help boost their small businesses..

Tulay sa Pag-Unlad, Inc. (TSPI) was also a finalist in the Microfinance Institution (MFI) category.

The seven other nominees from TSPI were:

- **Alma Tria (Calauag Branch, Quezon)**, who sells arroz caldo con goto and has a GCash and PayMaya e-load and remittance business.
- **Angelina L. Rosendo (Mangatarem Branch, Pangasinan)**, a sari-sari store owner who was among the first to become a TAAS client-agent in 2016 and is now serving 180 clients a day, while still managing her online businesses.
- **Camille T. Pableo (Urdaneta Branch, Pangasinan)**, proprietor of the online bakeshop, "SweetCaZ Yummy Delights", and expanded her business to include a delivery service and gimmicks such as the "car trunk surprise".
- **Grace Ador Dionisio (Guimba Branch, Nueva Ecija)**, who started a mushroom chips business with her husband and took it online via the "REDJ Mushroom Farm" Facebook page, Lazada, and Shopee. '.
- **Ma. Eden P. Leis (Antipolo Branch)**, owner of the Jonathan Courier Service, an independent Lazada contractor. Before starting this, she was a TAAS agent and a TSPI Kabuhayan group lending program client for 11 years.
- **Nora T. de Leon (Valenzuela Branch)**, who started the direct selling of beauty products and homemade delicacies from her home, and later online.
- **Sheila Saltin (Lucena 2 Branch, Quezon)**, who sells frozen foods online, and manages a GCash e-loading and remittance business.

The DFIA Program was established by MCPI to strengthen financial inclusion through the digitalization of the microfinance sector. The program is funded by Citi Group and supported by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

Marilyn Centeno: Technology and resilience

Marilyn Centeno uses Facebook to promote her direct selling and buy-and-sell business merchandise. She also uses digital tools for monetary transactions.

Centeno, 59, started her business in 2007 with an initial P5,000 loan from TSPI. Her husband

and children are her business partners. She also maintains a small group of resellers, mostly close friends.

In 2016, she became a TSPI client-agent. Using the TSPI Agent Account System (TAAS), an in-house program developed by the organization's IT department, she began offering collection services. The TAAS system records and monitors the agent's transactions and client's payments. She also started using GCash services such as cash-in, cash-out, telco loading and bills payment.

The mother of four would also post on her social media accounts photos of her merchandise and cakes custom-made by her children.

As mobility was limited during the COVID-19 pandemic, Centeno reinvested in her GCash business, and saw an increase in online transactions. As restrictions eased, she revived her direct selling and buy-and-sell business. She turned over her online business to her sister-in-law under a 50/50 profit arrangement, and hired her nephew as a courier.

Her willingness to learn new technology for her business made her resilient during critical times. Her generosity in sharing her business success with family and friends makes her a fine example of servanthood and leadership.

Jeriel Gelito: A real millennial farmer

Jeriel Gelito, 26, is an agriculture graduate and rice farmer, who used to sell rice from his two-hectare field in Catanauan, Quezon the traditional way: in person. Face-to-face.

But the tech-savvy millennial knew he had to do something more to take his business to the next level. He started posting photos of his well-milled rice on Facebook Marketplace, extending his customer base to nearby towns. By adopting digital marketing techniques, he was able to reduce the time it took to sell his rice: from six weeks to three weeks.

Gelito also has a small e-loading and remittance business, utilizing GCash and PayMaya. He later began selling broadband

modems, averaging 10 customers a month and P6,000 in monthly commissions.

He further earned an extra P13,750 a month as a TAAS agent, transacting online the weekly amortization of 700 TSPI clients.

Thanks to technology, he now makes P425,000 from his combined businesses, a significant increase from the P140,000 annual income he gets just from farming.

He is now helping at least five friends start their own GCash business and is scouting for a team broadband agents to expand his area of coverage, all while maintaining his farming responsibilities (he is a member of the Catanauan Farmers Association). He also plans to build a store in the town proper.

Ma. Hazel Vitamog: Success is sweeter the second time around

Not long after she decided to turn her love for cooking into a business, Ma. Hazel Vitamog, 34, experienced her first loss. She had been earning P6,802 a week selling homecooked food within her barangay in Dardarat, Ilocos Sur when she tired promoting her food on Facebook.

Someone stole her posts and, consequently, her customers. Thankfully, she had a fallback: a sari-sari store she opened a few years earlier with a P5,000 loan from TSPI.

Despite her unfortunate experience, Vitamog tried online marketing again. She made a new account and gained even more followers, bringing her weekly earnings to P15,000. She has even expanded her business, setting up a kiosk for dine-in customers.

Through her business, Vitamog is able to help her partner provide for their only child's needs, and for the medication of her mother, also a TSPI member.

She shares her blessings with the parish church and supports the local basketball league. During the pandemic, she donated relief goods to her community.



MCPI gives technical support to TSPI to ramp up digitalization initiatives

On September 20, 2022, TSPI was selected to receive support under the technical assistance component of the Digital Financial Inclusion Awards (DFIA) Program of the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI).

This was in response to a proposal by TSPI, which was deliberated upon by senior officials of Citi Philippines, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and MCPI.

“[MCPI] will provide support in the expenses of TSPI amounting to USD4,000 (approximately PHP230,000.00) for key activities and/or payment for specific consultancies,” Allan Roberto I. Sicat, MCPI Executive Director, said.

The DFIA Program’s technical assistance component is an awareness and readiness campaign to promote the adoption of digital solutions. TSPI was one of five MFIs selected to participate in a digitalization workshop and receive technical support from the program.

The chosen MFIs will also have a chance to carry out their pilot digitalization initiatives.

“Through these efforts, the first DFIA will ultimately motivate other MFIs and microentrepreneurs to adopt digital solutions in their institutions that will expand digital financial services and empower local business,” MCPI said on its website.



Ulirang Nakatatanda

Sabiniana C. del Rosario:

A lifetime of serving like Jesus



At 72, Sabiniana C. del Rosario has spent practically a lifetime serving others, particularly those in need. She has been working tirelessly as a barangay health worker for nearly five decades, expecting nothing in return.

Her selfless service, however, could not go unrecognized. Del Rosario, better known as “Nanay Baby,” was recently named as one of the Sampung Ulirang Nakatatanda (SUN). The award is given annually to “inspiring and outstanding older persons” by the Coalition of Services of the Elderly, Inc.

She accepted the award in an online ceremony during Elderly Filipino Week in October 2022. How fortuitous! TSPI’s theme in 2022 was “Serve like Jesus”, exactly what Nanay Baby has been doing for the last 48 years.

“Masaya akong makatulong sa kapwa. Ito ang plano ng Diyos, na magsilbi nang walang inaasahang kapalit (I am happy to help others. It is God’s plan for me to serve without expecting anything in return),” she said.

She proudly shares the honor with TSPI, where she has been active since 1994 as the oldest client of the General Mariano Alvarez (GMA), Cavite Branch. She is a former Grand Council Officer and is also enrolled in the Golden Life Insurance Plan (GLIP) of TSPI MBAI.

Nanay Baby is proud and grateful to belong to TSPI, noting that it is the first organization set up to help

aspiring entrepreneurs. She believes in its strong, solid association and its dedication to its mission of delivering Filipinos out of poverty. She urges members and clients to preserve TSPI’s trust.

Nanay Baby continues to work as health worker (paramedic) in four GMA barangays, including Jacinto Lumbreras, where she once served as councilor. She started as a volunteer there in 1974, organizing soup kitchens for malnourished children. In the 1980s the Department of Social Welfare and Services (DSWD) formally organized the barangay health workers.

Later, she also assisted in the Tuberculosis Control Program of the Department of Health (DOH), accompanying patients to their checkup and treatment, and monitoring their medicine intake. During the Covid-19 pandemic, she was a frontliner, promoting the importance of vaccination and assisting barangay residents in getting their shots.

Nanay Baby trusts God to give her strength to continue serving. “Nananalig ako sa Diyos na pananatilihin niya akong malakas para maipagpatuloy ko ang pagsilbi. (I have faith that God will keep me strong so that I can continue serving others.)”

The tireless volunteer rallies everyone: “Sama-sama tayong tumulong sa ating kapwa hanggang sa ating makakaya (Let us all help others for as long as we can!)”



Sambayanihan Centers:

Centers for Christ-like service

It is usually a gazebo-like structure, a shed or a hut that serves multiple purposes. There people gather, fellowship, learn, give and receive support, pray and reflect in a welcoming environment.

This is the Sambayanihan Center, a venue for informative and transformative activities and services under the Sambayanihan Program. It is a tangible expression of bringing good news and hope to families and communities.

The Sambayanihan Center is a second home to TSPI clients, members, employees and their families. And home is where charity begins. Last year, in celebration of TSPI's 41st anniversary, the Sambayanihan Center was the staging area for charitable acts depicting the year's theme, "Serve like Jesus."

On October 21, 2022, they gave to those in need (Hebrews 13:16), worked with love and joy (Philippians 2:3-5), spread the Word of God (Psalm 96:3) and prayed for each other (Ephesians 6:18).

In 35 centers around Luzon, TSPI members, clients, employees and family members joined hands to feed children and senior citizens, clean their surroundings, plant trees, play games, distribute Bibles and school supplies, organize medical missions, partake of a thanksgiving salu-salo, make Christmas decorations, and give gifts. Through TSPI's ministry partners, they also participated in Bible studies and fellowships. The centers were festooned with multicolor paper bunting and other décor that clients and staff crafted. The TSPI Tayabas Branch even used palm fronds and rice stalks dyed red, blue, and yellow, reminiscent of the province's well-

known Pahiyas Festival. They even hung corn, longganisa, and suman, to celebrate and promote their province's best-known products.

Prominently displayed in all the centers was the theme, "Serve like Jesus," rendered in a variety of creative ways: written in colorful artwork on the center façade, or spelled out in multicolored straw or cut-out letters pasted on the interiors, as in the TSPI Umingan Branch in Pangasinan.

The inspiration for the Sambayanihan Center came at a time when mankind was in the grip of fear, uncertainty, and isolation, seeking solace and assurance during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The concept took shape in 2021, the year TSPI marked 40 years, a period referenced in the Bible as end of Israel's wandering in the desert and their entry to the Promised Land.

To the TSPI community, its 40th year was a time to thank and praise God for delivering them from the challenges of the past four decades, and more recently, the pandemic. The ultimate goal was to bring our services as close as possible to the clients' place of residence or work in utmost safety and convenience.

That year, 40 centers were built, the first one opening on March 19, 2021 in Bato in Camarines Sur, under the supervision of the TSPI Nabua Branch.

Typically, a Sambayanihan Center is a modest spare space—evocative of Christ's humble birthplace—offered voluntarily by a client and conveniently located near their business outlet, making it a familiar and safe place. During the pandemic, when people's movements were limited, the presence of a center facilitated the efficient distribution of benefits and services to the community.

It is also a symbol of the Sama-Samang Responsibilidad (SSR) culture among TSPI clients and employees. As TSPI President Rene Cristobal said, "Each Sambayanihan Center tells a story of a partnership fostering volunteerism."



The first center was built in precisely this manner, with clients and members donating spare materials like pieces of wood, and offering free labor. As a result, only half of the modest P25,000 budget TSPI had set aside for the construction was spent. This spirit of cooperation has been replicated in all the branches.

By the end of 2022, the number of centers had risen to 83, with 14 more under construction and five set to be built. As of the first quarter of 2023, the count was 108. This translates to wider community coverage, greater access to programs and services, more thorough interaction among center leaders and members.

Above all, this also leads to a deeper discipleship in the TSPI community. When you enter a

Sambayanihan Center, you not only feel at home, you also feel the presence of God. It is His house as well.

A multipurpose venue

Initially, regular activities involve loan releases, collections, and socializing (kamustahan). Today the Sambayanihan Center serves as venue for activities under the Sambayanihan Program, jointly implemented by the NGO, TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (MBAI), and other partners.

The program covers social development services classified into five areas: values formation, enterprise training and development, health and sanitation, disaster and medical assistance, and other benefits for members and the community.

The center also plays a key role in spreading the Good News to more communities through the Usapang Paglago kay Kristo, the Gospel-sharing portion of weekly meetings. As of June 2022, the Word of God had reached nearly half of the communities served by TSPI's 120 branches nationwide.

Other values formation activities include “Debosyon kay Kristo” servant-leadership training, Kasalang Bayan, Batang Kristiyano, Bible study and fellowship.

Activities throughout 2022 included:

- Center dedication ceremonies in Canatanuan, Tayabas and Unisan in Quezon Province; Urdaneta and San Fabian in Pangasinan; Nagcarlan, Laguna; Labo, Camarines Norte; and Tubao, La Union
- TSPI Christian Voters Education in Talavera, Nueva Ecija; Paniqui, Tarlac; Batac, Ilocos Norte; Candelaria, Tagkawayan, Tayabas and Sariaya in Quezon Province; and Quezon City
- Distribution of Bibles in Legazpi, Albay; and Nagcarlan, Laguna
- Servant-Leadership Training in Valenzuela, Bulacan; Balayan, Nasugbu in Batangas; Indang, Cavite; Naga, San Fernando in Camarines Sur; and Tayabas, Sariaya and Lucena in Quezon Province



The joy of knowing Jesus and serving like Jesus



The year 2022 presented an opportunity to refresh and refocus on the organization's mandate: bringing good news to the poor and hope to communities. TSPI carries out this mission through selfless service, as Jesus does. Hence the theme "Serve like Jesus," the exhortation of TSPI President Rene E. Cristobal.

"After surviving the challenge of the pandemic, by God's faithfulness, the theme was a timely reminder that "we are in TSPI to serve unselfishly," he said. Human frailty sometimes detracts from this noble goal, making one expect praise for the good that the organization has achieved. "That is self-serving," he said.

"We in TSPI feel God's love and bear witness to it. So, we pass on the blessing to our fellowmen, selflessly, without expectation. The theme was also a way of reminding and reassuring our clients that we are here to serve them. That is the joy of serving like Jesus."

How does one serve like Jesus? First, one must know Jesus.

As Christians, we are taught to emulate Him and exhibit His traits. We are taught that Jesus is compassionate, loving, forgiving, humble, prayerful, patient, gentle, committed, and has self-control. He saw the needs and afflictions of the people and in His infinite love and compassion, He addressed them.

He even offered the ultimate sacrifice, His own life, for our salvation. And even in extreme agony on

the Cross, He found it in His heart to forgive those who inflicted Him unimaginable pain and suffering.

The most enduring image of Jesus as servant leader is His washing of the feet of His disciples prior to His crucifixion, an act of love re-enacted on Holy Thursday.

The message to "Serve Like Jesus" was disseminated primarily through the series of TSPI Employee Retreats conducted by sector. Rousing cheers of "We... we serve... We serve like Jesus..." echoed through the halls at the end of each retreat. The theme is also now printed in the TSPI ID lanyard as our service tagline.

At the close of the year themed "Serve like Jesus" a Servant Leadership Training was conducted by TSPI's ministry partners and area managers to animate and propagate the spirit of Christ-like service. The training was organized by TSPI's ministry partners and area managers and held at the Sambayanihan Centers and branch offices.

In Mark 10:45, Jesus says, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve." He is God, with supreme authority, but He chose to humble Himself and serve others instead. Jesus is a leader. He inspired and empowered people to create positive change in their lives and in the lives of others. But he is also a servant, whose example touched lives and created waves of change in society and in the world.

This is what TSPI aspires to be: humble servant-leaders who desire to see change in the lives of those we serve.

TSPI Staff Retreat 2022

An immersion in Christ-like service

“Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” (Mark 6:31)

“For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.” (Luke 20:27)

These two verses encapsulate the purpose and intention of the 2022 TSPI Annual Employee Retreat. As Christians, we need to pause from the hustle and bustle of life and spend time exclusively with God. It is during our communion with Him that we gain insights into His will and how we can further enrich our spiritual life. The latter verse particularly shone a light on last year’s 41st anniversary theme, “Serve like Jesus,” an exhortation to the TSPI community by BOT President Rene C. Cristobal. The five retreat topics expounded on the theme, referencing Scripture, and served to recharge and inspire the participants.

At the outset, the retreat masters underscored the participants’ purpose in the TSPI community—not to do any ordinary job for personal gain to benefit a few, but to carry out a mission for God’s kingdom by serving the last, the least, and the lost, as Jesus did. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

Believing, connecting with Jesus

Believing in Jesus means committing our lives to Him and trusting Him totally and completely as our Savior and Lord. With Jesus in our lives, experiencing His grace and love, we can love and serve others unconditionally.

Serving like Jesus is not a strategy or a style but a way of life, a natural consequence of our letting Him into our lives.

Walking with Jesus

When Jesus calls us to walk with Him, we follow Him just as we are—imperfect human beings who still try to do good in the world. Following Jesus does not mean just going to church or believing in who He is. It means putting aside our personal agenda in favor of His. It means devoting time for Him. When our lives are touched by His grace, we find purpose and fulfillment in bringing others into His kingdom.



Doing as He has done

By washing His disciples' feet, Jesus modelled servanthood, acting with humility and compassion. He also took breaks to rest, pray, talk to His Father and fellowship with Him. We need to do the same. Take time to rest, pray and reflect. Read the Bible and receive inspiration and instruction. Seek fellowship with God alone to revive our spirit and body.

Rewards for serving like Jesus

God rewards His children who are loyal to Him, both here on earth and in heaven. The earthly rewards are: Joy in serving (Acts 20:25), experiencing, witnessing answered prayers (James 5:16), having God's favor (Nemiah 2:4-8), rest when serving (Hebrews 4:9-10), Being comforted, having peace (2 Corinthians 1:4), being constantly hopeful (Joshua 1:9).

In sum, the reward is Jesus Himself.

Committing to serving like Jesus

How do we commit to serving like Jesus? First, we have to undergo sanctification, or the process of being freed from sin to become more like Jesus, to see Jesus, and to do God's will consistently. Second, we need to heed the Lord's call.

What does serving like Jesus require?

- **S** - Sacrificial service (Ephesians 5:2)
- **E** - Excellent service (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- **N** - Neutral service (Romans 2:11)
- **D** - Determined service (1 Corinthians 16: 13)
- **M** - Meek service (Matthew 5:5)
- **E** - Efficient service (2 Corinthians 3:5)

Participants shared their thoughts after the retreat. One said, they "grew not only as employees but also as believers in Christ." Another said their faith in the Lord deepened. One felt blessed to be loved and supported by many, noting, for example, that even account officers "who you think didn't cared actually do."

Servants and stewards: We are all God's "tulay sa pag-unlad"

Every employee, client, and member of TSPI is living testimony of God's love and grace.

To sustain its mission of sharing God's good news to the poor, TSPI shepherds its community toward spiritual maturity through discipleship activities that inspire everyone in their role as faithful servants and stewards of God. Fundamental activities are prayer and devotionals.

Every day starts and ends with a prayer at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. in the Head Office via a public address system. Every Wednesday, the Head Office, branches and Sambayanihan Centers hold morning devotionals on living "intentional discipleship", which simply means loving people with a purpose, leading them into a deeper relationship with God. These activities are routinely posted on TSPI's Facebook page.

Topics covered by the Wednesday morning devotionals follow a monthly theme. The following are some of the topics discussed in 2022.

- **January-February:** Connecting to God in Prayer (How to pray; A deeper look at The Lord's Prayer)
- **March:** Pamilya Ko, Love Ko (The Body of Christ, Service to God; Help to the nation)
- **April:** Be free through God's mercy (Freedom from iniquity; How to forgive; Healing the land)
- **May:** Making the Gospel known (Sharing the Good News; Winning and making an impact for Christ)
- **June:** Speech that makes a difference (Life-giving words; Humble tongue; How to please God)
- **July:** Use what you have (God's gift to His people and sharing it with others)

- **August:** Be a service to God (Serving sacrificially, tirelessly, without boundaries)
- **September:** Get a good catch (Fishers of men; Harvest of righteousness; Fruit of a lifetime)
- **November:** Come, let's grow together (Growing in God's love, in humility, in gratitude)
- **December:** Heart of Christmas (Proclaiming the King in the manger)

An Ash Wednesday Mass was held in March, and a Lenten recollection in April. In October, a fellowship with the Senior Management Team was held instead in celebration of TSPI's 41st anniversary.

Other discipleship activities were a seminar on Christian Voters Education in March and April, in preparation for the May 2022 Presidential Elections; an employees' retreat from August to October with the theme, "Serve like Jesus"; and a workshop on TSPI core values in October.

People who live God-centered lives know their identity and self-worth. They have self-discipline. When they are connected with God, they achieve their full potential and live fruitful lives. When they are God-centered, they understand other people better and have more compassion toward them. When they are God-centered, they become good and responsible citizens.

The goal of the discipleship activities are set down in the Usapang Paglago Framework. God is in the center of the lives of TSPI employees, clients, members as individuals, and of their relationships with family, community, and countrymen.





TSPI recognized by Jollibee Group Foundation as partner in agri-enterprise development

On May 19, 2022, TSPI received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Jollibee Group Foundation (JGF) as a local implementing partner for the Farmer Entrepreneurship Program (FEP). Implemented in 2017, the program aims to develop small farmers into skilled agri-entrepreneurs who could become suppliers of Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC) and other institutional buyers.

The Magsalisi Farmer Growers of Calamansi (MASIFAGCA) Pangkabuhayan, Inc. of Jaen, Nueva Ecija is a testimony to the program's success. The farmers were taught supply management and financial planning, price and quantity bidding, and using technology to grow their agri-enterprise.

After completing the program in 2018, the group began supplying calamansi to Jollibee.

In January 2022, the Jollibee foundation congratulated MASIFAGCA for being the first FEP group to be recognized as an outstanding supplier of Jollibee Foods. The recognition follows the Bronze Award the farmers group received for high-quality produce and service during the 2021 Jollibee Foods Supplier Summit.

The foundation also paid tribute to Imee Patinogo, MASIFAGCA Communication and Documentation Head, one of the female farmers empowered by FEP "who are sowing changes to break gender barriers in agriculture," JGF said in a message on its website. Most of the MASIFAGCA members are women.

"FEP encourages farmer clusters to make sure all members contribute to their success and that they can all be leaders regardless of gender," Gisela Tiongson, JGF Executive Director, said. Aquilina Onesa, TSPI Alliance and Partnership Group Head, said "FEP ensures that everyone benefits from the trainings and skills expansion, so that many more farmers are being empowered in the field."

MASIFAGCA was formed in August 2017 by 27 calamansi farmers who became members of TSPI's Programang Pang-Agrikultura (TPP), a lending program that offers production loans for rice, corn, and high-value crops and affordable funds for farming inputs and labor. The farmers formed the group to qualify for the FEP under the TSPI-JGF partnership.



Sambayanihan Center Business Program acclaimed by Rotary Makati

The Rotary Club of Makati (RCM) presented an Award of Appreciation to TSPI for their partnership in implementing the Sambayanihan Center Business Program for Microentrepreneurs during its Annual Awards and Thanksgiving celebration on June 28, 2022.

The award was received by TSPI Executive Director Alice Z. Cordero and Aquilina Onesa, Head of TSPI's Alliance and Programs Group. The Sambayanihan Center Business Program is designed to upgrade the digital business operations and sustainable livelihoods of 75 TSPI client-agents in the Bicol Region, Quezon province and the National Capital Region. They are those earning P6,000 a month from digital businesses like online selling and telco loading, and microentrepreneurs who have sari-sari stores and buy-and-sell businesses.

Digital payment systems offer safer and more convenient digital transactions for TSPI client-agents' loans and microinsurance. The training also opens opportunities for expansion to other digital business opportunities such as online selling and e-wallet services. Under the program, RCM contributed P529,000, representing 90 percent of the total budget,

for materials used in capacity-building trainings, business kits and additional working capital. TSPI covered the remaining 10 percent, representing the cost of MIS maintenance and upgrading.

The business kits include a smartphone, with a message stipulating the trainees' responsibilities for safekeeping, maintenance and replacement of the unit if damaged or lost within three years. RCM also monitors and evaluates the progress of the program through TSPI monthly reports, visits project sites, and participates in the distribution of training kits.

TSPI implements the program, provides business kits, conducts trainings and quarterly performance recognition for TSPI client-agents and their branch personnel. It also provides additional working capital through TSPI's Livelihood Loan Program and assigns coaching and supervision through the TSPI client-agents' account officers and branch managers.

Program beneficiaries ultimately include the 12,000 clients served through digital payment platform by the 75 TSPI client-agents.



TSPI and Standard Chartered focus on women microentrepreneurs

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments and private institutions worldwide have laid out and activated various economic recovery programs. In the Philippines, among the hardest hit is the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector, an integral contributor to the Philippine economy.

Microfinance institutions like TSPI play a key role in the recovery and future resilience of this sector. As such, TSPI partnered with the oldest foreign bank in the Philippines, Standard Chartered Bank (SCB). The parent bank's foundation operates Futuremakers, a global initiative to address inequality by promoting economic inclusion for underprivileged youth, particularly girls, and people with visual impairments.

As part of the Futuremakers Program, Standard Chartered launched the Living Participation Project with TSPI, under the latter's Sambayanihan Center Business Program (SCBP). The project aims to provide opportunities to women microentrepreneurs and women-led micro- and small enterprises to achieve social and financial inclusion and to transition to more sustainable enterprises with the use of green technologies and digital innovations.

Recent studies have shown that the digital economy is the main driver of economic growth. It helps increase capital and boost productivity, consequently bringing down prices of goods and services.

"The partnership with Standard Chartered lent much-needed support to TSPI's livelihood programs and enabled the organization to provide a target clientele—young women micro-entrepreneurs—the opportunity and funding to revive and even scale up their businesses," TSPI Executive Director Alice Z. Cordero said.

The initial 30 beneficiaries from 14 branches in Pangasinan were women TSPI client-agents involved in the collection of clients' loan repayment dues using the in-house TSPI Agent Account System (TAAS). They were chosen through a process that took into account their reputation, trustworthiness, interest in growing a digital-based business, and willingness to learn.

TSPI client-agents play a key role in Sambayanihan Centers as center leaders. They ensure that loans are paid regularly so that clients maintain good credit record. They promote access to TSPI loan programs and social

services, and provide customer service for clients. In addition to the service fees they earn, TAAS agents are also usually engaged in businesses like sari-sari stores, telco loading, buy-and-sell, and re-selling of food products and clothing.

Conducted from April to December 2022, the SCB-TSPI Sambayanihan Center Business Program sought to train the TSPI client-agents on the benefits of digital-based livelihood, build sustainable livelihoods for them, and support them with business kits, capacity-building, and working capital for digital-based livelihood opportunities.

The P1.25-million grant from the Standard Chartered funded the trainings as well as the beneficiaries' additional working capital requirement to scale up their digital-based activities.

The 21 training sessions covered values formation, business management skills, livelihood investment, loan management, microinsurance, savings discipline and financial literacy. Beneficiaries also received a TSPI Kabuhayan Program special livelihood loan at a special monthly interest rate of 2.5% for TAAS client-agent transactions and for other businesses.

The Sambayanihan Center Business Program (SCBP) Report highlighted the impact of the project on the beneficiaries in the following aspects:

- **Business sustainability:** All beneficiaries reported growth in their TAAS business, with P9,700 as the average monthly net income per individual. They all reinvested a portion of their TAAS income into their TAAS business and/or other businesses, mostly for inventory. Of the 30 beneficiaries, two reinvested more than 30 percent of their income. Three bought a tricycle.
- **Financial security:** Beneficiaries oriented themselves with microinsurance benefits, with 22 availing of microinsurance Kaagapay Plans

for themselves and their families. They also learned the value of health insurance, with seven availing of Philhealth coverage with an annual premium contribution of P4,500.

- **Improved quality of life:** 22 beneficiaries were able to support their children's education from their income as client-agents. Fifteen had improvements done on their homes.
- **Other business opportunities:** Four beneficiaries became TSPI MBI coordinators for microinsurance services. Others are eyeing future livelihood opportunities such as GCash outlets, telco loading, bills payment, and ISKAPARATE online business.

Overall, the SCBP report concluded that digital-based business is a major source of diversified income of TSPI client-agents, with a well-defined target service area per agent, dedicated agent serving clients regularly, developed trust among clients for loan payments.



TSPI partners with FINEX to foster financial literacy

In the process of transforming lives through microentrepreneurship, the importance of financial literacy cannot be overemphasized. TSPI's Transformation Framework lays it out clearly. Giving clients access to loans is combined with the teaching of business skills to hone decision-making ability. These undertakings are fortified by spiritual nurturing. With God in the center of their lives, clients imbibe ethical values and develop credit and savings discipline.

In fulfilling its mission, TSPI is fortunate to have the support and assistance of various institutions. One of them is FINEX Research and Development Foundation, Inc., an organization of financial executives committed to fostering financial literacy and entrepreneurship in poor but deserving individuals and families. Among its key activities are seminars on basic financial literacy, basic bookkeeping, and livelihood projects, all conducted through its Social Involvement Committee.

FINEX Foundation and TSPI have forged an agreement to collaborate in implementing a Basic Financial Literacy Program for the latter's clients and employees.

Under the agreement, FINEX Foundation develops the materials and modules for the Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Training and taps resource speakers within and outside the organization.

Meanwhile, TSPI promotes the training to ensure maximum attendance and handles administrative and technical support. It provides case studies used as references and gathers and develops information, data, photos used in the training for information and education campaigns in social media and posters.

Both organizations co-facilitate the pre-training assessment and final evaluation.

With the help of FINEX, TSPI's Basic Financial Literacy Program was upgraded and simplified, according to TSPI Executive Director Alice Z. Cordero in a speech at the FINEX General Membership Meeting in May 2021.

"Adapting to the new normal, the sessions were delivered by dedicated FINEX Foundation Leaders through TSPI webinars," Cordero said.

She also cited the critical role that support from various government agencies plays in providing



needed funding for micro-entrepreneurship loans. TSPI's Basic Financial Literacy Program is divided into two days: lectures and case studies. The five lectures and topics included are:

- **Maagang Patnubay ng Magulang sa mga Bata (Early Parental Guidance to Children):** Open communication, valuing money and the importance of saving, living within one's means, care for the environment, prayer and worship
- **Pamamahala ng Kabuhayan (Managing Livelihood):** Needs vs. wants, what to save for
- **Mga Babala sa Pamamahala ng Kabuhayan (Business Mistakes to Avoid):** Going into business without learning it; listening to hearsay; linking up with dubious partners
- **Mga Importanteng Katangian (Ideal Traits):** Diligence and perseverance, discipline, continuous learning, ability to delay gratification, family participation in the business
- **Pag-aaral ng mga Paraan ng Pamumuhay (Learning Practical Ways of Living):** Urban gardening, family planning for the future

- **Mahahalagang Bagay na Dapat Isaalang-alang (Essential Life Hacks):** Rewarding oneself, being a good citizen, sharing with others, secret to happiness.

In her speech, Cordero reported that in the last 40 years, TSPI had granted loans amounting to P130 billion to more than 4 million households. Women microentrepreneurs make up 90 percent of its clients, while 10 percent are farmers and indigenous people.

"We teach them business skills, and they learn decision-making," she said. "We teach clients to regularly save a portion of their livelihood income." Through their loans, TSPI clients are able to save and gain access to microinsurance products. Of their client base, 75 percent have savings of up to P10,000; one now has P200,000.

TSPI clients learn to embrace credit discipline, savings discipline, and the ethical values of doing business. But even more importantly, they build a deeper relationship with God, family and community.

TSPI recognized as pioneer in digital finance in 2022 GCash Awards



Tulay sa Pag-unlad, Inc. (TSPI), a pioneer in microfinance in the Philippines, was recognized in pioneering digital finance programs at the 2022 GCash Digital Excellence Awards, held virtually last March 31, 2022.

TSPI, along with 15 other enterprises, were cited for paving the way in democratizing financial services. The organization received the Industry Pioneer Award, given for the first time to partners working with the MSME sector.

TSPI Executive Director Alice Z. Cordero, accepted the award on behalf of TSPI. "TSPI is honored and blessed to be among the recipients of this award," she said. "Financial inclusion through digitization is consistent with TSPI's advocacy to reach out to less privileged Filipinos."

GCash, under Globe Telecom, is the country's leading mobile wallet app. It enables users to shop online and in-store, pay bills, send money, and top up mobile phone credits.

TSPI's partnership with GCash started in 2012. Today, more than 60 percent of TSPI's customer base and a hundred percent of its employees are enrolled in GCash.

Like other microfinance institutions, TSPI would previously disburse loans to its clients the traditional way: through checks. A TSPI branch would open and maintain a bank account in its area of operations where clients can easily go for their financial transactions.

Manual disbursements, however, posed challenges. These were addressed by digital alternatives like e-money or e-wallets. TSPI clients were encouraged to open a GCash account, where their loan disbursements could be credited.

TSPI also made sure its system was robust enough for the shift to digital disbursement, and its staff equipped to handle after-credit concerns.


Initially, some clients found the process of shifting to an unfamiliar method tedious, particularly those who did not have a cellphone and a SIM card. Eventually, though, they warmed up to the idea and began to see its value as they experienced the convenience it brought.

With GCash, they no longer had to queue for over-the-counter transactions. They could withdraw their loan proceeds anywhere, anytime, with no fixed banking hours and days. TSPI staff no longer had to prepare checks. Disbursement was done digitally, centralized at the TSPI Head Office.

The convenience of the e-wallet was further heightened during the COVID-19 Pandemic, when mobility was restricted and virtually every activity had to be done digitally.

Today, TSPI employees and clients use GCash not only for loan releases but also for bills payment and crediting advances, incentives, and prizes. For the year 2022, TSPI disbursed P430 million digitally, accounting for 31,874 transactions.

One CLICK! is all it takes



“Nagustuhan ko ang TSPI CLICK dahil hindi ko na kailangang magtanong sa aming Account Officer o tumingin sa passbook dahil nakikita ko na agad ang account at CBU ko.”

Ciela Tagle
TSPI Client for 13 years
TSPI Mulanay, Quezon Branch

tspi click!
Check your Loan, Insurance, CBU Kaagad

TSPI Talay sa Pag-unlad, Inc.
(A Microfinance NGO)

TSPI MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION, INC.

TSPI CLICK!
*mobile app gives
clients faster, better
transaction services*

On November 4, 2022, during the organization’s 41st anniversary celebration, TSPI launched its new TSPI CLICK! mobile app as part of its ongoing digitalization efforts to provide better, more efficient services to for its clients.

“CLICK!”, which is an acronym for “Check your Loan, Insurance, Capital build-up Kaagad!” is a mobile app that allows clients easy access to check their balances at any time and updates them on the status of their TSPI loan, savings, and insurance accounts. They can check their current and past loan transactions and track their capital build-up (CBU) balance in real time, anywhere.

“It’s easier for me now to understand where my payments go. I can track my deposits in my savings and see my CBU anytime,” said Teresita Dorado, a client under TSPI Nagcarlan Branch.

TSPI CLICK is one of the features of TSPI MicroFinCore, an online application providing online services to TSPI clients and employees. The main functions and processes are suited to account monitoring, amount due, insurance policy information and loan origination.

The new initiative also gives TSPI account officers and agents a much faster way of doing reloans and loan applications, freeing them up for other things related to their work. Issues and concerns are addressed more quickly.

“With TSPI CLICK!, we no longer have to update clients’ passbooks individually. The time we used to spend on that, we now use for marketing and credit investigation of new members,” said Joan Red, account officer for TSPI Legazpi Branch.

Training was very critical to the program’s successful implementation. Tech-savvy staff were trained to be the digital champions responsible for training end users—account officers, agents and clients—on the use of the web and mobile platforms.

TSPI CLICK! is downloadable on the Google Play Store. A hundred clients signed up in the first three days. As of December 2022, TSPI CLICK! already has 7,425 registrants (6 percent of 125,978 active clients), and still counting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



DAVID T. BUSSAU | FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

I commend you for your continuous passion, energy and enthusiasm to make Christ known to the communities which you are part of."

Mr. Bussau is TSPI's Founder and Chairman Emeritus. He left a successful business career at the age of 35 to pioneer the concept of providing marketplace solutions for social problems, which include health, education, nutrition, water, microfinance, persecution, leadership and sex trafficking. He also actively promotes good governance among not-for-profit organizations.

He is the founder of Maranatha Trust, Opportunity International Australia and 15 international movements including Wholistic Transformation Resource Center Foundation Inc. (WTRC) in the Philippines. He serves as a consultant to multinational firms and has a team of dedicated colleagues in Asia who implements and monitors development programs.

Mr. Bussau is renowned for his innovative and creative approach to post-disaster rehabilitation, contending that wealth creation and the power of market forces will accelerate poverty alleviation and nation-building. He challenges the old development paradigms and encourages fresh, exciting, audacious and bold out-of-the-box entrepreneurial ideas to liberate the poor. He wants to ignite the creative spark in people to release the amazing potential in each individual to live more dynamic, fulfilling and purpose-driven lives.



ATTY. LAMBERTO L. MEER | CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

"We are called by God in TSPI for a purpose because God loves us. He called us to serve others and He will never forsake us. Long live TSPI! Praise be to God!"

Atty. Meer is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees since 2001. He has been serving in TSPI since September 1984 where he was Corporate Secretary prior to becoming the Chairman. He succeeded the former Chairman Emmanuel N. Pelaez, His Excellency Vice President of the Philippines and Ambassador to the United States, who was his father-in-law. Currently, he is also the Chair of the BOT Executive Committee.

Atty. Meer is the Managing Partner of Meer, Meer & Meer, a 69-year-old law firm founded by his grandfather, father, and uncle. He has a deep passion for transformation work, evidenced by his active involvement in various ministries. He is the Convenor of the Pilipino Movement for Transformational Leadership (PMTL) from 2015 to present. It is one of the largest coalitions of Christian organizations in the Philippines whose focus is to form, support, and elect competent Christian servant leaders. His previous positions in line with transformation work were: Senior Head Coordinator of Ligaya ng Panginoon Community (LNP), Chapter Head of Couples for Christ (CFC), and EXCOM Member of Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals (BCBP).



DR. ABRAHAM F. PASCUAL | VICE-CHAIRMAN

“Surrender your lives to God and you will live with joy and peace. Have faith in God at all times. Here at TSPI, we have every opportunity to follow this command to ‘love one another’, through our work of helping especially those who are in need.”

Dr. Pascual, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees, joined the TSPI Board of Trustees in July 2007. He is the Chair of the BOT Governance Committee.

He is a multi-awarded entrepreneur. He was a recipient of the Golden Shell Rising Award from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in 1997, Philippine Marketing Association’s Agora Awardee for Outstanding Achievement in Entrepreneurship (Large Scale) in 2001, Go Negosyo’s Most Inspiring Bulakeño Entrepreneur in 2008 and PLDT and Go Negosyo’s MVP Bossing Awardee in 2013.

Dr. Pascual’s entrepreneurial expertise made him a backbone to various entities. He is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Pascual Laboratories, Inc. (PascualLab). He also sits as Member of the Board of Directors to four other companies, namely, L & I Development Corp., Agape Development & Research Corporation, Halang East Corporation, and Octten Holdings Inc.



RENE C. CRISTOBAL | PRESIDENT

“Let Jesus be the One we love. He must be the One we serve. To give people, to help them and to serve them, in order to know God... that is our purpose in TSPI.”

Mr. Cristobal has been serving TSPI since October 2000. He is a Member of the TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI) Board of Trustees, and is the President of the TSPI Microfinance NGO. He is also a Member of Employer’s Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP).

Founder and Chairman of the Board of REC Group of Companies, a provider of overseas employment to Filipino Professionals, technicians and maritime crew members in both land-based and sea-based sectors, mainly to European and American contractors and ship owners since 1978. He founded and chaired the Association of Professionalism in Overseas Employment (ASPROE), composed of non-fee charging and ethical recruitment agencies licensed by the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration Employment (DOLE), and the Office of the President, and has been elevated to the “Hall of Fame”.

Mr. Cristobal is also co-founder and Vice President of the Bagong Bayani Foundation, Inc which honors outstanding overseas Filipino workers. He is a former member of the Board of Governors of the Employer’s Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), former chairman of ECOP’s Corporate Social Responsibility (now headed by its Council of Leaders), while serving as special adviser on labor migration to the ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE). He is also CEO of companies involved in integrated engineering services, manufacture of innovative construction materials and advocate for the development of bamboo plantation and processed products such as charcoal and activated carbon.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



RICARDO G. LAZATIN | TREASURER

"How can we serve our Lord? By serving those whom he loves—his people. When we do our work excellently, we are giving thanks to our Lord God who entrusted to us the talent and resources to accomplish our mission. Because the work we do is a blessing from our Lord."

Mr. Lazatin, Treasurer of TSPI Board of Trustees, joined the Organization in June 2017. He is presently the Chair of BOT Risk Committee and Vice Chair of BOT Investment Committee. He is also a Member of the TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI) Advisory Council.

His more than 45 years in the banking industry made a mark through the top management and executive-level positions he held in various companies. Currently, he is the President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Power Source Group Dev. Corp and several subsidiaries and affiliates; President and Senior Managing Partner of CEOs Inc.; Senior Partner in Argosy Advisers Inc.; President/CEO of Home Funding Inc.; President/CEO of Argosy Finance Corp and Vice Chairman of GSN Land Inc. He spent more than 30 years in three major universal banks and two major finance companies in the Philippines. He is an active lifetime-member of the FINEX, FINEX Foundation and Philippine Finance Association (PFA) meriting various FINEX and PFA Presidential Merit, Service and Lifetime awards for several years.

He is also actively involved in ministry works as the Chairman and President of Tahanan ng Panginoon Foundation as well as Trustee and Corporate Treasurer of Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon Foundation, Inc.



ATTY. CORNELIO C. GISON | CORPORATE SECRETARY

"When I started in TSPI, I didn't have a clear idea of my role. If the call at the beginning is not clear, we pray and the Holy Spirit can make us see clearly what is that call for service."

Atty. Gison joined TSPI Board of Trustees on March 6, 2006. He is concurrently serving as a Corporate Secretary of TSPI and as Vice-Chairman of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI) Board of Trustees.

He is of Counsel of Salvador, Llanillo and Bernardo Law Office. He is also a Member in different capacities of various groups: Board of Trustees, Andrew Gotianun Foundation, Inc.; Panel of Arbitrators, International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes, World Bank Arbitration Body, Washington D.C.; and Tax Committee, Filinvest Group. He was a Member of Metrobank Advisory Board, Member/Consultant of its Audit Committee and Partner and Head, Tax Practice of SGV & Co.

Atty. Gison also served the government as Undersecretary for Revenue Operations of the Department of Finance under two administrations (Estrada and Arroyo) from 2000 to 2003. He also had a brief stint as Acting Commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and a Tax Consultant of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (PSALM). He was also the former President of the Capital Markets Integrity Corp, a member of the Philippine Stock Exchange Group from 2013 to 2017.



JUANITA D. AMATONG | TRUSTEE

"We in TSPI are not just giving material things, we are also propagating Christian values."

Ms. Amatong started her service as a Member of the TSPI Board of Trustees in June 2012. She is the Vice-Chair of BOT Audit & Compliance Committee. She is also a Member of the Board of Trustees of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI).

She is a passionate public servant. She has been in government service for most of her career. She served as Secretary of Finance from December 2003 to February 2005, before she was appointed as a Member of the Monetary Board of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas from 2006 to 2011. She was also a Member of the Board of Directors in the World Bank, Washington, D.C. from 1996 to 1998. Until April 2021, she was Member of the Board of Directors of Banko ng Kabuhayan (formerly Rodriguez Rural Bank, Inc). In addition, she is an Adjunct Professor of Public Finance and International Finance in Silliman University, a Protestant-affiliated school in Dumaguete City, where she started her career as a teacher and served as Member of the Board of Trustees for 20 years. She now serves as a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Silliman University Foundation Medical Center.



CARLOS RHEAL B. CERVANTES | TRUSTEE

"The road to financial freedom usually feels long and winding, unless you have someone working to keep you in their wings to nurture and form you until you can go head straight. I see TSPI always working hard to keep as many under its flock to serve the Lord."

Mr. Cervantes joined the TSPI Board of Trustees in 2022. He is an investment banker who specializes in the securitization of receivables, fund raising and financial management, with over 29 years of experience in finance and banking. He is a trust professional, a financial management instructor and a former certified SEC representative for both fixed-income securities and investment company products. He has extensive experience in financial and credit arrangement advisory, marketing bank products, branch management and financial analysis.

He is Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer of PowerSource Group Holdings Corp. and its subsidiaries; President and Chairman of Accessus Lending Company, Inc.; Executive Vice President and COO of Argosy Finance Corp. and Home Funding (SPC), Inc. Argosy has invested in, advised on, and raised significant funds in various investment transactions in the Philippines and internationally since 1999. Mr. Cervantes previously served as First Vice President of Philippine Veterans Bank; Senior Manager, Land Bank of the Philippines; and Branch OIC of Mindanao Development Bank.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



RAYMOND DANIEL H. CRUZ, JR. | TRUSTEE

"In any circumstance that we are in, always consult God. God is delighted when you asked Him. When you ask, learn to listen. Wait for a while for Him to speak to you or to the people you are with. When we listen, we become confident that He is leading us and we learn to accept God's message even if it sometimes hurts."

Mr. Cruz joined the TSPI Board of Trustees in 2022. He is Director of WeGen Laudato Si, an energy company that helps Catholic dioceses transition to renewable energy, in response to the challenge of Pope Francis in his "Laudato Si" encyclical.

He is national president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission of the Laity-Sangguniang Laiko ng Pilipinas. He is also Executive Director of Philippine Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (PhilCCRS); Director of Leadership Development and Mission at Ligaya ng Panginoon Community; and Catholic Coordinator of Purpose Driven Ministries Southeast Asia.

A former theology teacher at University of Sto. Tomas High School, Mr. Cruz previously served as Executive Director of the Pilipino Movement for Transformational Leadership and the Ligaya ng Panginoon Foundation, Inc; Youth Coordinator of PhilCCRS National Service Committee; and Director for youth and family life at Ligaya ng Panginoon Community.



RICHARD D. DAGELET | TRUSTEE

"What sets TSPI apart is not just the work we do, but the profound ripple effect it generates in the communities we serve. Rooted in Christian values, we instill empowerment, and foster an environment defined by prosperity, dignity, and sustainable progress."

Mr. Dagelet is a new member of the TSPI Board of Trustees, joining in September 2022. He is also a member of the Advisory Council of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (MBAI).

He is the founder, Chairman and CEO of eScience, an IT company providing mobile solutions to over 70 companies dealing with healthcare, consumer goods and logistics. He also founded several companies that launched pioneering and innovative services for mobile customers, among them Smart Solutions, E-Store Exchange, and Secure Payment Networks. He has been in the IT industry since 1999. He founded the first e-commerce service in the Philippines, allowing the purchase of goods and services via mobile phone and the internet. He also created the patent for location-based services for traffic monitoring in 2005. In 1997-1998, he was CEO of Danka Philippines, the leading vendor of Kodak Digital office products. He worked in sales, marketing, and general management at Kodak Philippines from 1987 to 1996.

He is a coordinator at Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon Community (ALNP), a Resource Speaker in the Marriage and Parenting course of ANLP, Director of Sandiwaan Learning Center in Tondo, Manila, and Founder/Director of Internet of Things.



JOSE D. FIDER | TRUSTEE

“God is telling us to become more loving in all that we do. He wants to bless you with the life that is full. Wait on the Lord. Be faithful to Him. And always trust in Him.”

Mr. Fider started serving as a Member of the TSPI Board of Trustees in August 2010. He is the Vice-Chair of BOT Risk Committee.

His heart to see advancement and growth among the poor extends through his passionate service in various ministries. He is a Service Team Member at Tahanan ng Panginoon, an outreach program that helps the poor communities in Metro Manila. He is also a Trustee of Puso ng Ama Foundation, a non-profit organization serving the youth in the former Payatas dump site, and of Cradle of Joy (COJ) Catholic Progressive School, a non-profit school established by a faith-based organization. Currently, he is the President of BFL Bookstores Inc. and Trans Access Corp.



ALBERTO M. MALVAR | TRUSTEE

“When we pray, let us ask God what He wants us to do and tell Him, ‘Lord, I will yield to whatever You want.’”

Mr. Malvar’s service in TSPI as a Member of the Board of Trustees started in June 2012. At age 40, Mr. Malvar left the corporate world and responded to God’s calling to begin a full-time reforestation mission in the Upper Marikina Watershed in an effort to minimize the destructive effects of typhoons to Metro Manila. Together with his family, he founded the Mount Purro Nature Reserve (MPNR), an eco-park and a social enterprise pioneering sustainable travel destinations. MPNR promotes a lifestyle of stewardship, simplicity, and sharing. They established the MPNR Foundation, an organization that advocates the rehabilitation of the Upper Marikina Watershed through the empowerment of the upland communities living within the watershed, particularly the Dumagats. Both organizations are vital to his pursuit of an overarching dream of a flood-free Metro Manila and a thriving Upper Marikina Watershed that functions as the “lungs of Metro Manila”.

His environmental preservation and development work in Antipolo, Rizal has been running for over 30 years highlighting God, Nature and People as the true measures of genuine community development.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



MA. LUZ A. PLANAS | TRUSTEE

“When you work for an institution like TSPI, it is nothing about you. It is about working for an institution in reaching out to more clients so they can have better life and eventually enjoy fullness of life.”

Ms. Planas joined TSPI Board of Trustees in October 2000. She is the Chair of BOT Audit and Compliance Committee. She is the current Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI).

Ms. Planas is the Chairperson of VA Alvarez Realty Corp., where she formerly served as the Treasurer (1995- 2006). She is currently a Board Member of the BF West Homeowners Association.

She was previously with the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI). She became President and CEO of BPI Forex Corporation from 1999 to 2004. She is actively involved in various civic and religious organizations as a Board Member. Her noteworthy contributions in community development include the renovation of the Resurrection of our Lord Parish Church in BF Parañaque and the greening of BF West Executive Village also in Parañaque City. She also partnered with a local community at her hometown in Roxas City to build the new Pueblo de Panay. She is a passionate professional dancer joining competitions locally and abroad.



FLORENCIA G. TARRIELA | TRUSTEE

“Know Jesus Christ, know Him as our Lord and Savior. Jesus is all we need. Because He is the answer to all our needs.”

Ms. Tarriela's service with TSPI as Member of the Board of Trustees started in October 2003. She is the Chair of the BOT Investment Committee and the Vice-Chair of the BOT Governance Committee. Presently, she is the Treasurer, Board of Trustees, of Tulay sa Pag-unlad Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI).

She holds the distinction for being the first woman chairperson of the Philippine National Bank (PNB) and the first Filipina Vice President of Citibank N.A. She was a former Undersecretary of the Department of Finance and was an Alternate Monetary Board Member of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC). She also held several key positions as President of Bank Administration of the Philippines, Independent Director of PNB Life Insurance, Inc. and Director of Bankers Association of the Philippines.

As a banker, entrepreneur and an environmentalist, she has been recognized as the Go Negosyo 2018 Woman Intrapreneur Awardee, Most Outstanding Citibank Philippines Alumni Awardee for Community Involvement (2014), and Distinguished Lady Banker awarded by the Bank Administration Institute of the Philippines. She is also a co-author of several inspirational and gardening books.



TERENCE R. WINTERS | TRUSTEE

“Our dream is that by helping a parent to build a small business, their children will grow up with a future that’s full of hope.”

Mr. Winters serves as the Chairman and Non-Executive Director of several Australian private companies and charities. He is currently Chairman of Converge International Pty Ltd. He also serves as a Director of Many Rivers Microfinance Limited, and was immediate past Chairman or a Director of Seeing Machines Limited, TasmaNet Pty Ltd, Intelledox Pty Ltd and Redflex Holdings Limited. After working for Motorola for 10 years, he founded Link Telecommunications Pty Ltd. in 1983 and was CEO and/or Chairman of Link at different times until 1999 when he sold his interest in the company. He led the creation of Optus Communications Pty Ltd from 1989-1992 and remained on the Optus board until 1995. Mr. Winters spent over 17 years on various boards within the Opportunity International Network before ending his term as global Chairman in 2010.



ANNA ISABEL C. SOBREPEÑA | TRUSTEE

Ms. Sobrepeña joined the TSPI Board of Trustees in 2022. She is an award-winning writer and editor, and seasoned public speaker. She was named 2019 Most Influential Filipina Thought Leader and Innovator by the Foundation for Filipina Women’s Network (FWN) in Paris; and 2018 Asia Leaders Awards Editor of the Year.

She was editor in chief of Lifestyle Asia from 2007 to 2018, during which she collaborated with various sectors, companies, and groups such as Philippine Business for Education, Caritas Manila, Make-A-Wish Foundation, to promote meaningful luxury through shared advocacies (e.g. tree-planting, scholarships, teacher training and children’s welfare).

She previously edited True North, a Christian lifestyle magazine, nominated for best community magazine in the Catholic Mass Media Awards. Books she edited include “Wives are Lovers, Too” and the “Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon 40th Anniversary Commemorative Book”. She published eight coffee table books of significant lives, Philippine homes and tablescapes which presented the good in our country and in our people.

Ms. Sobrepeña has given talks on personality development, social graces, and the Philippines as a tourist destination. She is also a well sought speaker on Christian seminars such as Christian living and improving communication in marriages.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



ALICE Z. CORDERO | EX-OFFICIO MEMBER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"What has been consistent in TSPI is our commitment of bringing God to everyone. As long as you are God-centered, you believe in what God has given you and you use the resources the right way, then you will succeed whatever comes to you."

Ms. Cordero joined TSPI in May 2019. She serves concurrent positions as the Executive Director of TSPI and as President and Chief Executive Officer of TSPI Mutual Benefit Association, Inc. (TSPI MBAI), the microinsurance arm of TSPI.

Ms. Cordero gained her management and leadership expertise through her solid career in banking. She was Philippine National Bank's First Senior Vice President (FSVP) until April 2019 and was appointed as the Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) of the Bank on June 2010 with oversight of the Parent Bank, including all the subsidiaries, affiliate and foreign branches. She also served as the Corporate Governance Executive of the Bank. From 2008-2019, she served as Director and presently as Adviser of the Association of Bank Compliance Officers (ABCOMP). She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Business Economics from the University of the Philippines, and earned units in Masters in Business Administration from the Ateneo Graduate School of Business.

Her 40 years of banking experience include working for Philippine National Bank (PNB) from 2010 to 2019, ABC (1979-1983; 2007-2010, First National Bank of Chicago-Manila Branch (1983-1986), Far East Bank and Trust Company (1986-1988) and Citibank N.A.-Manila Branch (1988-2007), where she held department head positions in Credit Policy, Credit and Research Management, Financial Control, Corporate Regulatory Reporting, Asset Strategy, Business Development, Risk Management, and Compliance.

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- Rene E. Cristobal
- Atty. Cornelio C. Gison
- Mr. Ricardo G. Lazatin

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- Alberto M. Malvar (Advocacy/Alliances
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- Rene E. Cristobal (HR)
- Jose D. Fider (Committee Membership)
- Raymond Daniel H. Cruz, Jr.
(Transformation)
- Atty. Lamberto Meer (Related Party
Transactions)

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Ricardo G. Lazatin (Chair)
Carlos Rheal B. Cervantes
Ms. Ma. Luz A. Planas

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IT, FINANCIAL, OPERATIONAL, FRAUD

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- Carlos Rheal B. Cervantes
(Financial, Fraud)
- Terence R. Winters

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- Terence R. Winters

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TSPI PLEDGE

God loves us.

Our work at TSPI is a blessing from His graciousness.

We are part of the organization and its mission.

It is our duty to serve with great honor and dignity so we can help in the mission of spreading to our members the **goodness of our God**, for them to **experience the true love of God**, and for their businesses and farms to progress.

All these through our continuous obedience and **faithfulness to Christ**, and most of all, **our desire to glorify God**.



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