

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1705



Introduced by **Rep. ANGELO MARCOS BARBA**
2nd District, Ilocos Norte

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) is a community-based capability-building program for poor, vulnerable, and marginalized households and communities to help improve their socioeconomic conditions through accessing and acquiring necessary assets to engage in and maintain thriving livelihoods. This livelihood support measure would ensure that current and exiting 4Ps households, *Listahanan-identified* poor households, and other vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged individuals and sectors are able to access resources and establish micro and small scale enterprises that could help support basic subsistence of the household (food, shelter, education, and utilities) or secure a source of income through basic employment. Through the DSWD-SLP, the Program empower and harness the inherent entrepreneurial skills and potential of SLP participants, so that they may be able to sustainably provide for themselves and to overcome their present conditions.

The SLP of the DSWD is a progenitor program of the Self-Employment Assistance Kaunlaran (SEA-K) Program. In 1996, DSWD implemented the SEA-K Program for skills development, technical assistance, and seed capital provision to enable the poor to have access to financial services. The Program also seeks to establish community-based, self-managed, and sustainable credit facilities to enable the poor, vulnerable, and informal sectors to engage in income-generating activities. The SEA-K remained the core financial assistance program of the DSWD until the early to mid-2000s. However, due to the increasing demand for labor force and employment, the need for a sustainable livelihood assistance was the prime concern of the Department. Hence, the Administrative Order No. 11 series of 2011 was issued to formally introduce SLP with an expanded platform of livelihood interventions.

As the Sustainable Livelihood Program progresses to be the core program of DSWD for livelihood support interventions, the enhancement of SLP Program design and guidelines was deemed necessary for the implementers and stakeholders to adapt to the growing demand for substantial and innovative interventions to better contribute to the attainment of the DSWD's strategic goal of transitioning the poor, vulnerable and marginalized from survival to self-sufficiency. The Department issued Memorandum Circular No. 22 series of 2019 which laid down the

Comprehensive Guidelines on the Implementation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program to strengthen and uphold the value of inclusivity of the poor, marginalized, vulnerable and/or disadvantaged households to fully participate in the country's growth and development.

Further, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department issued Memorandum Circular No. 19 series of 2020 to enrich the livelihood assistance of the Local Government Unit (LGU) to those that were affected by the series of lockdowns, closures, disaster, and calamities by providing emergency subsidies and recovery interventions such as the provision of Livelihood Assistance Grant (LAG) to low-income families in the informal sector whose livelihoods or jobs were affected. Currently, the SLP has a Success Rate of 65.15% based on monitored SLP tracks — Employment Facilitation and Microenterprise Development Track — and 95.44% Success Rate for LAG on both Employment Facilitation and Microenterprise Development Track as of May 2023. Lastly, the Program issued Memorandum Circular No. 2 or the Special Guidelines on the Provision of Livelihood Assistance to Families Affected by Disasters Through the Sustainable Livelihood Program, this is to ensure that the Program covers those households affected by natural and/or human-induced disasters.

The program aims to enhance the capabilities of poor Filipino households and Individuals by harnessing their skills, competencies, abilities, and resources in accessing income-generating opportunities to help improve their socio-economic well-being. Truly, this program served as a safety net for the poor households against the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is reported that the number of poor Filipinos could increase by 5.5 million if there weren't any social protection programs or market interventions that could provide livelihood development and basic entrepreneurship support. This scenario of sliding back to poverty is especially true for those 4Ps households exiting the program through natural attrition.

Through institutionalizing the DSWD SLP, the long term stability, certainty, and availability of resources for the participants of SLP is assured, thus increasing the opportunities for DSWD clients to avail of the livelihood support and modalities provided by the Program as a means and strategy for self-sufficiency and way out of poverty through microenterprise and/or employment.



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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD
PROGRAM (DSWD-SLP)

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. — This Act shall be known as “*The DSWD Sustainable Livelihood.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - The State shall promote livelihood development and entrepreneurship as a means to achieve sustainable development.

Pursuant to this policy, the State recognizes the need to alleviate the socio-economic conditions of the poor and vulnerable, especially those households enrolled in the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, individuals, groups, or communities who are classified as poor under the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) Listahanan, the Magna Carta of the Poor (RA 11291).

It is likewise the policy of the State to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the poor and vulnerable through the provision of market intervention and livelihood development through microenterprise development in facilitating and supporting basic employment.

Towards this end, the State shall respect and strengthen Filipino households, individuals, groups or communities by providing assistance that may be utilized through such inherent skills to achieve positive livelihood outcomes through community mobilization and community-driven enterprise development.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For purpose of this Act, the following terms are defined, as follows:

- (a) **Cash for Building Livelihood Assets Fund (CBLAF)** shall refer to an allowance or stipend provided to program participants who have rendered work for labor-intensive projects to build, re-build, or

protect natural and physical assets necessary for more profitable, self-sustaining, and resilient micro-enterprises;

- (b) Certificate of Accreditation (COA)** shall refer to a certification issued by the Standards Unit (SU) of the Field Office (FO) to the Sustainable Livelihood Program Association (SLPA) after the issuance of the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) by the SLP Regional Program Management Office (SLP RPMO). The Certificate of Accreditation shall be a requisite prior to the release of funds to the SLPAs under the Micro-Enterprise Development Track;
- (c) Certificate of Eligibility (COE)** shall refer to a certification signed by the Regional Program Coordinator of SLP Regional Program Management Office certifying that the SLPA or Employment Facilitation program participant/s have passed the eligibility requirements and complied with the processes of SLP. The Certificate of Eligibility is a requisite for the approval and obligation of the Mungkahing Proyekto and shall be the basis of the SU of the Field Office in issuing the Certificate of Accreditation to the SLPAs, EF participants and individual referrals;
- (d) Department** shall refer to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);
- (e) Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)** shall refer to a grant provided to program participants that will support a guaranteed employment such as: 1) processing of employment documentary requirements; 2) payment of medical tools and materials; and 4) transportation allowance, meal allowance, and board and lodging until the first 15 days of employment;
- (f) Employment Facilitation (EF)** shall refer to a track of the Sustainable Livelihood Program that provides assistance to qualified member/s of poor households who preferred employment rather than engaging in micro-enterprise;
- (g) Implementing Project Development Officer (IPDO)** shall refer to a Sustainable Livelihood Program staff of the Field Office responsible for the organization and facilitation of opportunities of program participants involving stakeholders within or outside the city/municipality;
- (h) Capacity Building Project Development Officer** shall refer to an SLP provincial staff responsible for ensuring that all the capacity-building activities for the program participants are provided accordingly. They are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the learning progress as well as the competency needs and gaps of the SLP participants.
- (i) Micro-enterprise Development Track (MD Track)** shall refer to a track of the Sustainable Livelihood Program which focuses on the establishment of micro-enterprise through the provision of financial

capital, enhancement of skills, and building/re-building physical and natural assets;

- (j) **Monitoring Project Development Officer (MPDO)** shall refer to a Sustainable Livelihood Program field staff responsible for the monitoring of the operationalization of the enterprises or employment and progress of the SLP association throughout the program monitoring period;
- (k) **National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR)** shall refer to the information management system that uses empirical methods to compile a database of who and where the country's poor are. The NHTS-PR is also often referred to as the "Listahanan";
- (l) **Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)** shall refer to the national poverty reduction strategy and a human capital investment program that provides conditional cash transfer to poor households for a maximum period of seven (7) years, to improve the health, nutrition, and education aspect of their lives. The National Advisory Council (NAC) may recommend a longer period under exceptional circumstances;
- (m) **Poor** shall refer to individuals or families whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and/or who cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing, or other essential amenities of life, as defined under Republic Act No. 8425, otherwise known as the "Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act";
- (n) **Program Participants** shall refer SLP associations, EF participants, individual referrals, or other recipients of the modalities of assistance provided by the Program;
- (o) **Seed Capital Fund (SCF)** shall refer to a start-up grant for SLP association or individual, used to purchase small tools, raw materials, and common service facilities such as machinery, equipment, and plant needed in starting or expanding a micro-enterprise. The SCF is only provided once per program participant;
- (p) **Skills Training Fund for Micro-Enterprise Development Track (STF-MD)** shall refer to a grant that is used for the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed in the management of the micro-enterprise to be managed by the SLPA or its members;
- (q) **Skills Training Fund for Employment Facilitation (STF-EF)** shall refer to a grant to be used for the acquisition of technical and vocational knowledge and skills delivered in the form of orientations and lectures, demonstrations, and other similar skills acquisition methodologies for the participants. The grant covers the following components: a) technical-vocational skills training fee; b) meal,

lodging, and transportation allowance; c) training supplies and materials; and d) program participants' assessment fee;

- (r) **System for Targeting of Beneficiaries** shall refer to a system for identifying who and where the poor households are through the generation of a socio-economic database of poor households that is adopted by national government agencies and implemented by the DSWD;
- (s) **Sustainable Livelihood Program Association (SLPA)** shall refer to an association with 5-30 members organized by the DSWD, through the SLP, which is issued with a Certificate of Accreditation making them eligible recipients of assistance of Sustainable Livelihood Program under the Micro-Enterprise Development Track;
- (t) **SLP-National Program Management Office (SLP-NPMO)** shall refer to an office of the DSWD Central Office responsible for managing the implementation of SLP, setting the overall direction, and issuing policies and guidelines, among others;
- (u) **SLP-Regional Program Management Office (SLP-RPMO)** shall refer to an office of the DSWD Field Office responsible for the management of SLP at the regional level providing technical assistance, supervision, and management of all SLP provincial offices.

SECTION 4. *The Sustainable Livelihood Program.* - The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is a livelihood capability-building program for the identified poor, vulnerable, and marginalized households and communities that provides assistance in the form of micro-enterprise development and employment facilitation to qualified SLP program participants. This livelihood assistance is to ensure that program participants are continuously capacitated towards entrepreneurship, employment and association's self-governance in order to have access to external resources such as additional credit, insurance, capacity building, and market linkages.

SECTION 5. *Modalities of Assistance.* - The SLP shall have two (2) major Tracks mainly: (i) Micro-Enterprise Development Track that provides support for the establishment of micro-enterprise livelihoods; and (ii) Employment Facilitation Track that provides support in securing and maintaining gainful employment.

The following are the modalities under the Micro-Enterprise Development (MD) Track:

- a) Seed Capital Fund;
- b) Skills Training Fund; and
- c) Cash for Building Livelihood Assets Fund.

The following are the modalities under the Employment Facilitation (EF) Track:

- a) Employment Assistance Fund; and
- b) Skills Training Fund.

SECTION 6. *Eligibility Requirements.* — Filipino households, individuals, and those in disadvantaged communities or groups such as Indigenous People (IP), Persons with Disabilities (PWD), and Solo Parent are qualified program participants of the Sustainable Livelihood Program: Provided, that the DSWD shall select qualified program participants of the program using the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) Listahanan: Provided further, that to be eligible to the program, the qualifications of program participants must be followed:

- a) Micro-Enterprise Development Track must be at least sixteen (16) years old, with written legal consent from the parents or legal guardians;
- b) Employment Facilitation Track must be at least eighteen (18) years old upon employment, following legal employment standards;
- c) Filipino families classified as poor under Republic Act 11291 otherwise known as the Magna Carta of the Poor;
- d) Classified as a poor household based on the system for targeting of beneficiaries; and
- e) The target program participants must be willing to comply with the conditions stipulated in this Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SECTION 7. *Livelihood Sustainability Matrix.* — The SLP shall utilize as its main key result areas, the developed SLP Livelihood Sustainability Matrix, wherein a graduated or tiered manner of providing livelihood assistance grants, capability building activities, coaching and mentoring, and technical assistance for livelihood development and organizational building. The matrix includes a set of performance standard indicators that pertains to the major aspect of livelihood development and association management, mainly: 1.) Technical Operations; 2.) Financial Strength; 3.) Organizational Development and Management; and 4.) Community Impact. Served SLP participants shall be measured on the four performance standards on an annual basis starting with Year 2 Implementation and shall be assessed through the use of annual assessment tools, to establish viability of participants for additional grants and capacity building through successive years.

SECTION 8. *SLP Implementation Stages I Operational Guidelines.* - The SLP shall operate in a five (5) year cycle, mainly:

- a) **Year 1 *Punla*** — the first round of implementation of the Program and shall consist of the Pre-Implementation, Social Preparation, Resource Mobilization, and Project Implementation;
- b) **Year 2 *Usbong*** — shall consist of the monitoring activities, coaching and mentoring, second round of capability building activities/training. Under this Year, the SLP shall provide Product Diversification and Development Grant.
- c) **Year 3 *Sibol*** — shall consist of continuing monitoring activities, capacity building, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring. During this implementation year, the SLP shall provide Formalization Support Grant to SLP associations and participants able and willing to undergo formal government licensing and accreditation.
- d) **Year 4 *Yabong*** — shall consist of continuing monitoring activities capability building, coaching and mentoring, partnership building and external linkages of SLP to regular markets and institutional partners.
- e) **Year 5 *Ani*** — shall consist of the official graduation of SLP associations that have achieved all the technical, financial, organizational, and community impact indicators, from the Program. Graduating SLP associations who have managed to sustain their livelihood and association can be eligible for a SLP Graduation Grants, subject to assessment and evaluation.

SECTION 9. *Institutional Arrangements.* — The DSWD shall serve as the lead agency for Central Coordinating, Planning, Implementing, - and Monitoring body on the program's overall management. The SLP National Program Management Office (NPMO) shall have the steering and oversight functions and tasks while the SLP Regional Program Management Office (RPMO) shall take charge in the implementation of the program stages.

The Program shall assign Implementing Project Development Officers that shall serve as the community facilitator who is responsible for identifying, organizing, capacitating the new program participants and shall validate the utilization of grants to ensure that the approved project has been duly implemented. Provided that the field monitoring shall be conducted through the Monitoring Project Development Officers that shall ensure that the modalities of assistance are sustained by the participants through the conduct of regular monitoring visits and assessments.

SECTION 10. *Functions of the SLP National Program Management Office (NPMO).* - The DSWD SLP NPMO shall perform and implement the following:

- a) Enhancement and development of Program policies, tools, and guidelines;
- b) Setting of performance standards and compliance monitoring;
- c) National program planning and coordination;

- d) Human resource management and capacity building for national and regional program personnel;
- e) National program budget management;
- f) National program monitoring and evaluation such as program milestones, accomplishments, results monitoring, and evaluation of program outcomes; and
- g) Other related tasks as required and necessary for the management.

SECTION 11. *Functions of the Regional Program Management Office (RPMO).* — The DSWD SLP RPMO shall perform and implement the following:

- a) Full implementation of the Program Stages based on the approved process, timeline, and program implementation parameters;
- b) Compliance to implementation standards and policies;
- c) Beneficiary level monitoring and evaluation for technical assistance and reporting;
- d) Participation to human resource development and capacity-building sessions;
- e) Obligation and disbursement of funds; and
- f) Regional, provincial, and city/municipality level coordination.

SECTION 12. *Regular Program Monitoring, Reporting, and Transparency.* - The DSWD SLP NPMO and RPMO shall regularly monitor the implementation of the program in order to ensure the attainment of the goals enumerated in this Act. The Program shall annually publish a full report of the SLP covering the implementation and accomplishments of the previous fiscal year. The said report shall include the total number of households served, physical and financial accomplishments, notable achievements, success stories, note-worthy capacity-building activities, and list of recommendations on how to further enhance the implementation of the SLP. The report shall be published in the DSWD official website.

SECTION 13. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against those authorized in the current and subsequent General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 14. *Oversight Committee.* — Upon the effectivity of this Act, a Congressional Committee, hereafter referred to as the SLP's Oversight Committee is hereby constituted. The Committee shall be composed of members from the Committee on Poverty Alleviation, Committee on Labor and Employment, and Committee on Social Services. The oversight committee shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Committee on Poverty Alleviation, while the Chairperson of the Committee on Social Services shall serve as

co-chair of the committee. Additional composition of the oversight committee shall be within the purview of the legislative body.

The Committee shall conduct periodic reviews to ensure the proper implementation of this Act as regards the expenditures of the earmarked funds, cost parameters of the modalities, accomplishments of the program, and the performance of its implementing offices.

SECTION 15. Coverage. — Exiting 4Ps beneficiaries, individuals, Filipino households, groups or communities Identified as poor by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) Listahanan and Republic Act 11291, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of the Poor, shall be covered as a program participant of the DSWD SLP. Moreover, the SLP participants shall also cover households identified as poor based on the system for targeting of beneficiaries used by the DSWD.

SECTION 16. Compliance to Republic Act No. 10713. - The DSWD SLP shall comply with the provisions of R.A. No. 10713, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Additionally, the Program shall further comply with the organizational, physical, technical and security measures prescribed in the SLP Data Privacy Policy and Sharing Protocol Manual.

SECTION 17. Data Sharing. — Data sharing between government agencies for the purpose of public function or provision of a public service shall be covered by a data sharing agreement; Provided, that the DSWD SLP shall comply with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012; Provided further, that all information filed with the DSWD SLP, National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) Listahanan, and other database system used by the DSWD SLP shall be made available to the stakeholders, institution, government agencies, departments and non-government agencies, including obligations to protect personal data and information.

SECTION 18. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within twelve (12) months from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD Secretary shall, in coordination with appropriate government departments and agencies with the participation of the local government units, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 19. Convergence of Programs and Services for Livelihood Support. - Within the scope of social protection and national poverty alleviation strategies, stakeholders such as other national government agencies, the private sector, volunteer groups, and the academe, among others, implementing multi-stakeholder programs and services for the poor and vulnerable, shall converge and complement the modalities offered by the DSWD SLP, Such convergence shall focus on the enhancement of operational efficiency, provision of additional financing, access to resources, enhancement of program modules and capability-building activities, and strengthening of external partnerships and linkages.

SECTION 20. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions shall not be affected and remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 21. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or Issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 22. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,