



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 2836

Introduced by **Representatives JOCELYN P. TULFO, RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO, and EDVIC G. YAP**

**AN ACT PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Despite the Philippines' steady economic growth, rural communities continue to lag behind in development, with poverty incidence remaining high at 25.7% as of 2023. The **Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Act of 2025** addresses this disparity by establishing a comprehensive framework for sustainable rural progress. This bill recognizes that true national development cannot be achieved without uplifting our agricultural and fishing communities, who form the backbone of our economy yet remain among our most marginalized sectors.

The proposed legislation tackles multiple dimensions of rural poverty through seven key strategies: generating sustainable livelihood opportunities, improving financial access, enhancing skills development, building critical infrastructure, developing agricultural value chains, empowering local communities, and reducing urban-rural inequality. By creating a dedicated Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Council chaired by the Department of Agriculture, the bill ensures coordinated implementation across all relevant agencies including DTI, DSWD, TESDA, and DPWH.

This measure builds upon existing laws like the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (RA 8435) and Sagip Saka Act (RA 11321), while addressing critical gaps in current rural development programs. It specifically targets the infrastructure deficit with only 30% of farm-to-market roads currently paved (DA, 2024), limited financial inclusion, just 12% of farmers access formal credit (BSP, 2023), and climate vulnerabilities that disproportionately affect rural producers. The bill's emphasis on value chain development and agri-tourism creates new economic opportunities beyond traditional farming.

Funding will be sourced through the annual General Appropriations Act, with provisions for public-private partnerships and international grants. The proposed

programs align with the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 and support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). By institutionalizing a whole-of-government approach to rural development, this legislation will ensure that the benefits of national progress reach our countryside communities, fulfilling the constitutional mandate for equitable growth under Article XIII, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution.

We urge our colleagues' support for this vital measure to transform rural Philippines into engines of inclusive economic growth, food security, and sustainable development.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. JOCELYN P. TULFO
Representative, ACT-CIS PARTYLIST



HON. EDVIC G. YAP
Representative, ACT-CIS PARTYLIST



HON. RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO
Representative, 2ND DISTRICT OF QUEZON CITY



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Introduced by **Representatives JOCELYN P. TULFO, RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO, and EDVIC G. YAP**

AN ACT PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Short Title.

This Act shall be known as the "Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Act of 2025."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.

It is hereby declared the policy of the State to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth in rural areas of the Philippines by creating and strengthening opportunities for livelihood, improving access to essential services, and empowering rural communities. The State recognizes the vital role of rural areas in national development and commits to uplifting the socio-economic conditions of rural populations, reducing poverty incidence, and bridging the development gap between urban and rural areas, ensuring that the benefits of national growth are equitably distributed.

SECTION 3. Objectives.

This Act shall specifically seek to:

- 1. Generate Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities:** Establish and expand programs that provide diverse and sustainable income-generating activities for rural residents, particularly those in poverty-stricken areas, including support for agriculture, fisheries, agri-tourism, micro-enterprises, and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
- 2. Improve Access to Financial Services:** Enhance the availability of affordable credit, microfinance, and other financial products tailored to the needs of rural communities, farmers, fisherfolk, and small entrepreneurs, thereby stimulating economic activity.
- 3. Strengthen Capacity Building and Skills Development:** Provide relevant

training, technical assistance, and capacity-building programs that equip rural residents with the necessary skills for entrepreneurship, modern agricultural practices, new technologies, and access to better employment opportunities.

- 4. **Develop Rural Infrastructure:** Support the construction and improvement of essential infrastructure in rural areas, such as farm-to-market roads, irrigation systems, post-harvest facilities, and communication networks, which are crucial for economic development and connectivity.
- 5. **Promote Value Chain Development:** Encourage the development of robust value chains in agriculture and other rural industries, ensuring that producers gain better access to markets, fair prices for their products, and opportunities for value-added processing.
- 6. **Empower Rural Communities:** Foster community participation and self-reliance by strengthening local organizations, cooperatives, and associations, enabling them to actively engage in planning, implementing, and monitoring rural development initiatives.
- 7. **Reduce Poverty and Inequality:** Ultimately, uplift the socio-economic conditions of rural populations, reduce poverty incidence, and bridge the development gap between urban and rural areas, ensuring that the benefits of national growth are equitably distributed.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms.

For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **Rural Areas:** Geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, and other communities outside of highly urbanized cities, primarily dependent on agriculture, fisheries, or other natural resource-based industries.
- b. **Sustainable Livelihood:** Income-generating activities that are environmentally sound, socially equitable, and economically viable in the long term.
- c. **Micro-enterprises:** Business activities with assets of not more than Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00).
- d. **Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs):** Enterprises with assets of more than Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00) up to One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00).
- e. **Value Chain:** The full range of activities required to bring a product or service from conception to delivery to final consumers, including production, processing, marketing, and distribution.
- f. **Community Empowerment:** The process by which communities gain increased control over their lives and environment, and actively participate in decision-making processes affecting their development.

SECTION 5. Creation of the Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Council.

There is hereby created a Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Council," which shall be the primary coordinating and policy-making body for the implementation of this Act.

The Council shall be composed of:

- a. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) as Chairperson;
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as Co-Chairperson;
- c. The Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);
- d. The Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);
- e. The Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT);
- f. The Secretary of the Department of Finance (DOF);
- g. The Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
- h. The Chairperson of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA);
- i. One (1) representative from the private sector involved in agriculture or rural development; and
- j. One (1) representative from a recognized national organization of farmers and fisherfolk.

The Council shall formulate a comprehensive National Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Plan, monitor its implementation, and recommend policies and programs to achieve the objectives of this Act.

SECTION 6. Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities Program.

The Department of Agriculture (DA), in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and other relevant agencies, shall establish and expand programs for sustainable livelihood generation in rural areas.

These programs shall include, but not be limited to:

- Provision of start-up capital and equipment for micro-enterprises and MSMEs.
- Support for diversified farming systems, organic agriculture, and climate-resilient agricultural practices.
- Development of community-based agri-tourism initiatives.
- Promotion of sustainable aquaculture and fisheries.
- Facilitation of access to raw materials, technology, and market linkages for rural products.

SECTION 7. Improved Access to Financial Services.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), in coordination with the Department of Finance (DOF), shall develop and implement policies to enhance the availability of affordable and accessible financial services in rural areas.

This shall include, but not be limited to:

- Encouraging the establishment of rural banks, cooperative banks, and microfinance institutions.
- Promoting innovative financial products such as agricultural insurance, crop loans, and flexible repayment schemes.
- Facilitating the digitalization of financial services in rural communities.
- Providing financial literacy programs for rural residents.

SECTION 8. Capacity Building and Skills Development.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in coordination with the DA, DTI, and other relevant agencies, shall design and implement skills development and capacity-building programs tailored to the needs of rural communities.

These programs shall focus on:

- Modern agricultural and fishing techniques.
- Entrepreneurship and business management.
- Digital literacy and e-commerce.
- Vocational and technical skills relevant to emerging rural industries.
- Value-adding and processing of agricultural and fishery products.

SECTION 9. Rural Infrastructure Development.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination with the DA, Department of Transportation (DOTr), and other relevant agencies, shall prioritize the development and improvement of essential rural infrastructure.

This shall include, but not be limited to:

- Construction and rehabilitation of farm-to-market roads.
- Development and maintenance of irrigation systems.
- Establishment of post-harvest facilities, cold storage, and processing centers.
- Expansion of communication networks, including internet connectivity, in remote areas.

SECTION 10. Value Chain Development.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with the DA and other relevant agencies, shall lead efforts in developing robust value chains for key agricultural and rural products.

This shall involve:

- Facilitating market access for rural producers through trade fairs, online platforms, and direct linkages with buyers.

- Promoting product standardization, quality control, and branding.
- Encouraging investments in value-added processing and manufacturing in rural areas.
- Strengthening partnerships between producers, processors, distributors, and consumers.

SECTION 11. Community Empowerment and Participation.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and DSWD, shall strengthen the capacity of local government units (LGUs) and rural communities to actively participate in rural development initiatives.

This shall include:

- Providing technical assistance to LGUs in developing and implementing their local rural development plans.
- Promoting the formation and strengthening of cooperatives, associations, and other community-based organizations.
- Ensuring meaningful consultation and participation of rural communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of projects under this Act.

SECTION 12. Funding.

The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The Council may also seek and receive grants, donations, and other forms of assistance from local and international sources, subject to existing laws and regulations.

SECTION 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Rural Development and Livelihood Enhancement Council, in consultation with relevant government agencies, local government units, and stakeholders, shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 14. Separability Clause.

If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 15. Repealing Clause.

All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 16. Effectivity.

This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,