

TWENTIETH CONGRESS)
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 9381

Introduced by Representative KARL FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI

EXPLANATORY NOTE

“Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime,” aptly reflects the principle behind sustainable development and genuine poverty alleviation. True empowerment goes beyond temporary assistance and instead equips individuals and communities with the necessary skills, opportunities, and resources to achieve long-term self-sufficiency.

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has served as one of the government’s primary poverty reduction initiatives aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of poor, vulnerable, and marginalized sectors. Through its Microenterprise Development and Employment Facilitation tracks, the program provides beneficiaries with access to livelihood opportunities, skills enhancement, employment assistance, and financial support necessary to build sustainable sources of income.

Over the years, the SLP has contributed significantly to community empowerment and inclusive growth by helping Filipino families establish small enterprises, access employment opportunities, and improve their overall quality of life. However, despite its importance and continuing impact, the program remains dependent on administrative issuances and annual appropriations for its implementation. As such, its continuity and long-term sustainability remain vulnerable to policy changes and shifting budget priorities.

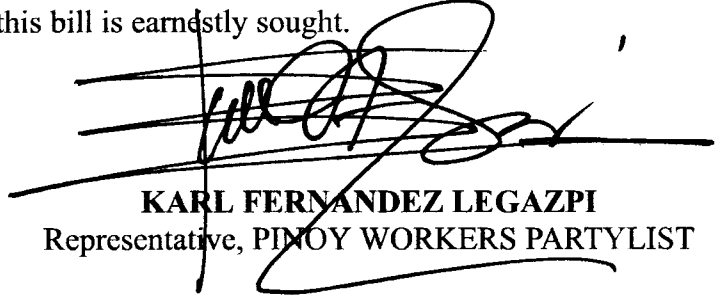
This proposed measure seeks to institutionalize the Sustainable Livelihood Program as a regular and permanent poverty reduction and capacity-building program under the DSWD. It aims to establish a clear framework for program implementation, funding, monitoring, and inter-agency coordination to ensure the consistent and effective delivery of livelihood interventions nationwide.

The bill likewise strengthens the program’s existing components, including the Microenterprise Development and Employment Facilitation tracks, while providing mechanisms for skills training, seed capital assistance, employment support, market linkages, and community-based capacity development. It also promotes transparency, accountability, and program convergence

with local government units, national government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector to maximize the program's reach and effectiveness.

By institutionalizing the Sustainable Livelihood Program, the State affirms its commitment to promoting social justice, reducing poverty, and empowering Filipinos to become productive, self-reliant, and economically resilient members of society. More importantly, this measure ensures that livelihood assistance evolves from a short-term intervention into a sustainable pathway toward dignity, opportunity, and inclusive national development.

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



KARL FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI
Representative, PINOY WORKERS PARTYLIST

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House Bill No. **9381**

Introduced by Representative **KARL FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI**

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

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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

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

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policies* - It is declared the policy of the State to promote livelihood and entrepreneurship for all to achieve sustainable development.

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.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms* – For the purpose of this Act, the following terms are defined, as follows:

- (a) ***Capability-Building*** - refers to the provision of institutional assistance to program participants geared at enhancing their competencies to start, manage, and sustain their established livelihood projects.

- (b) ***Disadvantaged*** - refers to an individual, family, or group who is considered economically, physically, and socially deprived or has inadequate means to protect oneself including indigent children, out-of-school youth, physically unfit and persons with disabilities, distressed individuals and families.
- (c) ***Employment Facilitation (EF) Track*** - refers to a track of the SLP that provides assistance to eligible program participants who prefer formal employment rather than engaging in microenterprise.
- (d) ***Micro-enterprise Development Track (MD Track)*** - refers to a track of the SLP 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.
- (e) ***Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)*** - refers 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.
- (f) ***Poor*** - refer to individuals or families whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined by the Department of Economy, Planning and Development (DEPDEV) 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"
- (g) ***Program Participants*** - refers to an eligible individual or members of the SLPAs who are in need of livelihood assistance and will be provided through the various modalities and interventions of the Program.
- (h) ***Sustainable Livelihood Program Association (SLPA)*** - refers to a beneficiary Civil Society Organization (CSO) organized by DSWD through SLP with minimum of 15 and maximum of 30 members in an association and is issued with Certificate of Accreditation (CoA) to be eligible recipients of SLP assistance under the Microenterprise Development Track.
- (i) ***Sustainable Livelihood*** - refers to a livelihood that can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. (Department for International Development, Adapted from Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992)).
- (j) ***Vulnerable*** - refers to households confronted by ex-ante risk that, if they are currently non-poor, will fall below the poverty line; if they are currently poor,

they will remain in poverty. It is defined in terms of exposure to adverse conditions related to welfare, not just their exposure to poverty.

SEC. 4. *The Sustainable Livelihood Program* - The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) is a livelihood capability-building program for the identified poor, vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged individuals, households, and communities that provide assistance in the form of Microenterprise Development and Employment Facilitation Track to qualified SLP program participants.

SEC. 5. *Modalities of Assistance* - The SLP shall have two (2) Tracks mainly: (i) Microenterprise Development Track that provides support for the establishment of microenterprise 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** - a grant used as start-up capital to purchase raw materials, small tools, and common service facilities such as machinery, equipment, and plants needed in starting or expanding a microenterprise. A maximum amount of twenty thousand pesos (Php 20,000.00) per individual program participant, and a maximum amount of thirty thousand pesos (Php 30,000.00) per SLPA member.
- b) **Skills Training Fund** - a grant used for the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed by the members of the SLPA in the management of the microenterprise. The grants cover 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. A maximum amount of twenty thousand pesos (Php 20,000.00) per program participant.
- c) **Cash for Building Livelihood Assets Fund** - an allowance or stipend is provided to SLPA members who have rendered work for labor-intensive projects to build, re-build, and/or protect natural and physical assets necessary for more profitable, self-sustaining, and resilient microenterprises. 100% of the present regional standard minimum wage set by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for a maximum of 11 days.

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

- a) **Employment Assistance Fund** is a grant amounting to seven thousand pesos (Php 7,000.00) provided to program participants pursuing the Employment Facilitation Track for the following purpose: a) processing of employment documentary requirements; b) for required medical exams; c) purchase of basic employment tools and materials; d) transportation and meal allowance, and board and lodging until the first 15 days of employment.

- b) **Skills Training Fund** is a grant received by the program participants for his/her 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 program participants. The grants 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. A maximum amount of twenty-thousand pesos (Php 20,000.00) per program participant.

SEC. 6. Eligibility Requirements – Filipino individuals, households, and those in the vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities that are in need of livelihood assistance. Provided, that the program participants are at least sixteen (16) years old, with a written legal consent from the parents or legal guardians to participate in the Microenterprise Development Track; and at least eighteen (18) years old upon employment, following legal employment standards, for Employment Facilitation Tracks.

SEC. 7. Beneficiaries of SLP - Eligible program participants may avail of the modalities within the chosen track as needed for the microenterprise or employment facilitation. The following may avail of the livelihood program:

- a) Pre-identified participants through the use of approved identification tool/systems or a combination of the following:
 - i) Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS);
 - ii) Other approved DSWD identification systems; and
 - iii) SLP Eligibility Assessment and Profile Form.
- b) Disaster-affected participants by natural disasters and human induced hazards.
- c) Area-Based Convergence participants identified through formal agreement between DSWD and its internal or external partners or stakeholders.
- d) Referred participants to SLP by internal or external partner(s)/stakeholders, or walk-in clients.
- e) Previously served SLP program participants that have been served at least five (5) years ago from the time they receive the grants.
- f) Associations registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), or Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), or those not initially organized by the SLP that are endorsed to the Program for livelihood assistance

SEC. 8. Livelihood Sustainability Plan – The Sustainability Plan encompasses the five (5) Phases of SLP which includes continuous monitoring and technical assistance of the

livelihood projects, capability-building activities, partnership linkages, and additional grant incentives for successful SLPAs until program graduation. The individual livelihood projects and EF Track program participants will be monitored and provided technical assistance for one (1) year from the time they receive the grants before being mainstreamed to the concerned LGUs.

SEC. 9. *Grant Release* - The DSWD shall release grants to individual program participants and SLPAs under the Microenterprise Development and Employment Facilitation Tracks through cash, cheque, or Auto Debit Arrangement (ADA), following existing government auditing and accounting rules and procedures.

SEC. 10. *Partnership Building* - The DSWD shall link public and private partners with SLP program participants to strengthen its implementation through the provision of complementary and/or supplementary interventions. The partnership building will sustain, provide funding support, link institutional markets, and develop community-based life skills and technical assistance to the livelihood projects.

SEC. 11. *Institutional Arrangements* – The DSWD shall serve as the lead agency for the 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 Project Development Officers that shall serve as the community facilitator 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. A field monitoring Project Development Officer shall be assigned to ensure that the modalities of assistance are sustained by the program participants through the conduct of regular monitoring visits and assessments.

The SLP NPMO shall perform and implement the following functions:

- a) Development and enhancement 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 of the Program.

The SLP RPMO shall perform and implement the following functions:

- 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.

SEC. 12. *Regular Program Monitoring, Reporting, and Transparency* - The DSWD through the SLP NPMO and RPMO shall regularly monitor the implementation of the Program and report its status 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 and individuals served, its physical and financial accomplishments, notable achievements, success stories, and list of recommendations on how to further enhance the implementation of the SLP. The report shall be published in the DSWD official website for transparency.

SEC. 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.

SEC. 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.

SEC. 15. *Compliance to Data Privacy Act of 2012* - The DSWD SLP shall comply with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 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.

SEC. 16. *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, and other database system used by the DSWD shall be made available to the stakeholders, institution, government agencies, departments and non-government agencies, including obligations to protect personal data and information.

SEC. 17. *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.

SEC. 18. *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, 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.

SEC. 19. *Separability Clause* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions shall not be affected and shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 20. *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.

SEC. 21. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,