

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL No. 11103

Introduced by REP. RAMIL L. HERNANDEZ

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Poverty reduction requires transitioning from temporary relief to long-term economic self-reliance. While social protection interventions provide immediate emergency assistance, breaking the cycle of poverty necessitates structured opportunities for marginalized households to build sustainable livelihoods.

This bill institutionalizes the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), transforming it into a permanent, statutory framework. By establishing clear, dual-track interventions – micro-enterprise development (MD) and employment facilitation (EF) – the measure provides target beneficiaries with startup capital, skills training, and employment assistance.

Institutionalizing the SLP secures consistent funding, establishes robust sustainability plans, and strengthens multi-stakeholder partnerships. Ultimately, this law empowers poor and vulnerable families to achieve economic independence and resilience against future socio-economic shocks.

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


RAMIL L. HERNANDEZ
2nd District, Laguna

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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 “**Sustainable Livelihood Program Act**”.

Section 2. *Declaration of Policies.* – It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that ensures the prosperity and independence of the nation, frees the people from poverty through adequate social services, and promotes full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.

Toward this end, the State shall capacitate the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized individuals, households, or communities to improve their socio-economic conditions by building sustainable and resilient livelihoods through skills and resources.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- a) *Capability-building* refers to the provisions of institutional assistance to program participants geared at enhancing the competencies to start, manage, and sustain the 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, persons with disabilities, and distressed individuals and families;
- c) *Employment Facilitation (EF) Track* refers to a component of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) that provides assistance to eligible participants who prefer formal employment rather than engaging in micro-enterprise;

- d) *Micro-enterprise Development (MD) Track* refers to the component of the SLP that focuses on the establishment of micro-enterprises through the provision of financial capital, enhancement of skills, and building or rebuilding of physical and natural assets;
- e) *Poor* refers to individuals or families whose incomes fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the Department of Economy, Planning and Development, or who are unable to afford in a sustained manner the minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing, or other essential amenities of life;
- f) *Program participants* refer to qualified individuals, or members of the sustainable livelihood program associations, who need assistance or other interventions;
- g) *Sustainable livelihood* refers to a livelihood that may 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;
- h) *Sustainable Livelihood Program Association (SLPA)* refers to a beneficiary Civil Society Organization organized by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through the SLP with a minimum of fifteen (15) and a maximum of thirty (30) participants in an association and is issued a Certificate of Accreditation to be eligible recipients of SLP assistance under the MD Track; and
- i) *Vulnerable* refers to individuals or households exposed to adverse welfare-related conditions who, if currently non-poor, fall below the poverty line, or if already poor, may remain in poverty

Section 4. Sustainable Livelihood Program. – The Sustainable Livelihood Program, hereinafter referred to as the “Program” of the DSWD, is hereby established as a livelihood capability-building program for the poor, vulnerable, marginalized, or disadvantaged individuals, households, and communities. The Program provides assistance to qualified participants through either the MD Track or the EF Track.

Section 5. Modalities of Assistance. – The modalities under the MD Track, which provide support for the establishment of micro-enterprise livelihoods, are as follows:

- a) *Seed Capital Fund* is a start-up capital grant for the purchase of raw materials, small tools, and common service facilities such as machinery, equipment, and plants, including other assets, needed in starting or expanding a micro-enterprise. To strengthen the viability and sustainability of micro-enterprise development under the SLP, the maximum amount of the Seed Capital Fund are as follows:
 - 1) An individual program participant is entitled to a maximum grant of Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00); and
 - 2) Each member of a duly accredited SLPA is entitled to a maximum grant of Thirty thousand pesos (P30,000.00), subject to the approved group business plan and program guidelines.

The DSWD shall update its program guidelines accordingly and ensure that the enhanced ceiling is implemented equitably, with priority given to vulnerable and marginalized sectors.

- b) *Skills Training Fund* is a grant in the maximum amount of Twenty thousand pesos only (P20,000.00) per program participant, which must be used exclusively for the acquisition of technical and vocational knowledge and skills needed by the members of the SLPA for the effective management, operation and sustainability of the micro-enterprise, and covers the following components:
 - 1) Technical-vocational training fees charged by accredited training institutions;
 - 2) Meal, lodging and transportation allowances incurred during the training period;
 - 3) Training supplies and materials essential to the learning process; and
 - 4) Assessment fees required for certification or competency evaluation.
- c) *Cash for Building Livelihood Assets Fund* is an allowance or stipend provided to SLPA members who have rendered work for labor-intensive projects to build, rebuild, and protect natural and physical assets necessary for more profitable, self-sustaining, and resilient micro-enterprises. The program participant is entitled to 100% of the current regional standard minimum wage set by the Department of Labor and Employment for a maximum of eleven (11) days;

Likewise, the modalities under the EF Track are as follows:

- 1) *Employment Assistance Fund* is a grant in the maximum amount of Seven thousand pesos (P7,000.00) per program participant who is a first-time job seeker. The program participant may use the grant for the following purposes:
 - i. Processing of employment documentary requirements;
 - ii. Medical examinations;
 - iii. Purchase of basic employment tools and materials; and
 - iv. Transportation, meal, and board and lodging allowances for the first fifteen (15) days of employment.
- 2) *Skills Training Fund* is a grant in the maximum amount of Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) per program participant 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. The grant covers the following components:
 - i. Technical-vocational skills training fees charged by accredited training institutions;
 - ii. Meal, lodging and transportation allowances incurred during the training period;
 - iii. Training supplies and materials essential to the learning process; and

- iv. Assessment fees required for certification or competency evaluation.

Section 6. *Eligibility requirements.* – To be eligible to participate in the Program, the program participants for the MD Track must be at least sixteen (16) years old, with written consent from the parents or legal guardians, and at least eighteen (18) years old upon employment for the EF Track.

Section 7. *Beneficiaries.* – The following may avail of the Program:

- a) Pre-identified participants determined through the use of an approved identification tools or systems, including any combination of the following:
 - 1) Community-Based Monitoring System;
 - 2) Other approved DSWD identification systems; and
 - 3) Program Eligibility Assessment and Profile Form.
- b) Participants affected by natural disasters or human-induced hazards, as validated by appropriate government agencies or local authorities;
- c) Area-based convergence participants identified through formal agreement between DSWD and its internal or external partners or stakeholders;
- d) Referred participants to the Program by internal or external partners or stakeholders, or walk-in clients assessed to meet program criteria;
- e) Former program participants who received grants at least five (5) years prior, and who demonstrate readiness for re-engagement based on updated eligibility assessments; and
- f) Members of the Association registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Cooperative Development Authority, or Department of Labor and Employment, or those not initially organized by the SLP that are endorsed to the Program for livelihood assistance.

Section 8. *Sustainability Plan.* – The DSWD shall formulate and implement a livelihood sustainability plan to ensure the success of the participants of the Program. The sustainability plan must guide program participants from starting up a micro-enterprise or finding employment to maintaining, expanding, and diversifying their sources of income, ultimately achieving economic self-reliance. Likewise, the sustainability plan must identify potential risks and provide strategies for resilience to economic fluctuation or other challenges.

Successful program participants graduating from the Program may receive additional incentives to encourage continued growth.

Section 9. *Grant Releases.* – The DSWD shall release grants to individual program participants and SLPA members under the MD and EF Tracks through cash, check, or auto debit arrangement based on existing government auditing and accounting rules and procedures.

Section 10. *Partnership Building.* – The DSWD shall facilitate partnerships between public and private stakeholders and program participants to strengthen the

implementation of the Program through complementary or supplementary interventions. The partnerships aim to sustain the Program's initiatives, provide funding support, link institutional markets, develop community-based life skills, and offer technical assistance.

Section 11. *Institutional Arrangements.* – The DSWD shall serve as the lead agency and the central coordinating, planning, implementing, and monitoring body of the program. The National Program Management Office (NPMO) of the Program shall provide overall direction. On the other hand, the Regional Program Management Office (RPMO) shall implement the phases or stages of the Program as may be prescribed by the DSWD.

The NPMO shall assign implementing project development officers to serve as community facilitators responsible for identifying, organizing, and capacitating the program participants, and validating the utilization of grants to ensure that the approved modalities are duly implemented. Likewise, the NPMO shall assign a field monitoring project development officer responsible for ensuring that the modalities of assistance are sustained by the program participants through regular monitoring visits and assessments.

Section 12. *Functions of NPMO.* – The NPMO shall:

- a) Develop and enhance the policies, tools, and guidelines of the Program;
- b) Set the performance standards and compliance monitoring;
- c) Establish the Program planning and coordination;
- d) Strengthen the human resource management and capacity-building for the national and regional program personnel;
- e) Administer the Program budget management;
- f) Formulate, implement, and record the program monitoring and evaluation such as milestones, accomplishments, results monitoring, and evaluation of outcomes; and
- g) Perform such other functions as may be necessary for the management of the Program.

Section 13. *Functions of RPMO.* – The RPMO shall:

- a) Implement the program stages based on the approved process, timeline, and parameters;
- b) Comply with implementation standards and policies;
- c) Monitor and evaluate the program participants for technical assistance and reporting;
- d) Participate in human resource development and capacity building sessions;
- e) Obligate and disburse funds; and
- f) Coordinate at the regional, provincial, and city or municipal levels.

Section 14. *Monitoring, Reporting, and Transparency.* – The NPMO and RPMO shall regularly monitor the implementation of the Program. The DSWD shall annually publish a full report covering the implementation and accomplishments of the previous fiscal year. The annual report shall include the total number of households served,

physical and financial accomplishments, notable achievements, success stories, and a list of recommendations on how to further enhance the implementation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program. The report must be published on the DSWD official website for transparency.

Section 15. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* – A Joint Congressional Oversight Committee to monitor the implementation of this Act is created and composed of five Senators and five (5) Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The Joint Congressional Oversight Committee shall be co-chaired by the chairpersons of the Committee on Social Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development of the Senate.

The Joint Congressional Oversight Committee shall conduct periodic reviews to ensure the proper implementation of this Act, pertaining to the expenditure of the funds, cost parameters of the modalities, systematic evaluation of the impact of this Act, accomplishments of the Program, and the performance of its implementing offices.

Section 16. *Compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.* – The Program must strictly adhere to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the “Data Privacy Act of 2012”, including its implementing rules and regulations. In accordance with said law, the Program must institute and maintain appropriate organizational, physical, and technical measures designed to ensure the security, integrity, and lawful processing of personal data.

Section 17. *Data Sharing.* – Data sharing between government agencies for public function or provision of a public service must be covered by a data sharing agreement. All information collected in the implementation of the Program may be made available to the stakeholders, institutions, government agencies, departments, and non-governmental agencies, subject to the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Section 18. *Support from Stakeholders.* – The national government agencies, private sector, volunteer groups, academe, and other stakeholders implementing multi-stakeholder programs and services for the poor and vulnerable are encouraged to complement the modalities offered by the Program. They may provide support to enhance operational efficiency, additional financial resources, program modules, and capacity-building activities, including strengthening external partnerships and linkages.

Section 19. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DSWD. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 20. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Social Welfare and Development shall, in coordination with appropriate government agencies and local government units,

promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 21. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected remain in full force and effect.

Section 22. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 23. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,