November 9, 2004

Administrative Order No.. **34**
Series of 2004

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES IN DETERMINING INDICATORS FOR BEST PRACTICES OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

I. Rationale

Executive Order (EO) No. 15 series of 1998 as amended by EO 221 dated June 30, 2003 provides that the Department, as the lead agency on social welfare and development, has to be in the forefront of demonstrating and providing the best quality of programs, projects and services for the poor and the disadvantaged. These programs or projects are implemented in partnership with Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) People's Organizations (POs), other Government Organizations (GOs) and other members of civil society.

The implementation being done by the Department aims to provide social protection and promote the rights and welfare of the poor, vulnerable, and the disadvantaged individual, family and community to contribute to poverty alleviation and empowerment.

The program/project can be considered as best practice through an identified set of indicators. These indicators shall serve as the basis to determine best practices which can be replicated in other areas or eventually adopted by DSWD's intermediaries and stakeholders.

Likewise, identifying "best practices" are helpful to practitioners and implementers. New ideas may come out which can be used as a material for program development. For beginners, "best practices" can serve as an inspiration to develop new programs, strategies or approaches or can be replicated more broadly.

In view of these, the following indicators for each key indicators shall be considered in determining compliance to set of standards for BEST PRACTICES of community-based programs and projects.

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II. DEFINITION OF "BEST PRACTICE"

"Best practice" refers to an exemplary application of methods, techniques, process or indicators in the successful implementation of SWD programs or projects, with the end view of providing the best interventions for the sector being served. It also entails the application of innovative techniques/models not included in the project design but has evolved during the implementation as a response to changing environment, cultural needs of the beneficiaries which enhanced the quality of the project.

III. PRINCIPLES IN IDENTIFIYING BEST PRACTICES

1. Interventions which have achieved singular results, or which have seen to have a positive effect in a number of situations, would give practitioners, an idea where to start.

2. We must be practical in determining "best practice". The approach must be capable of practical implementation.

3. "Best practices" identified can be used as a start of an ongoing process of learning not a static document. The list of good practices shall be used at anytime for guidance, but must be understood as constantly changing as affected by global economy, and other situations both national and local.

4. "Best practices" need continual updating as new lessons are learned, and new data become available.

5. "Best practices" may mean superb in one situation, but may be less in another where culture, stage of programme development or resources differ.

(Source: ILO-IPEC document)

IV. OBJECTIVES

Generally, this guideline aims to determine best practices on social welfare and development programs and projects which can be used as guide, reference or concept for program development and policy formulation.

Specifically, this guideline intends to accomplish the following:

1. To identify and recognize innovative best practices on programs and projects implementation.

2. To determine efficiency, relevance and responsiveness of the program/project to the poor and the disadvantaged for documentation and publication of best practices.

3. To generate data on best practices on program implementation as resource materials for policy formulation, program development, social marketing and other purposes.

V. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

These indicators shall be applied to social welfare and development projects/programs with either foreign or local funding and are implemented nationwide.

VI. INDICATORS

The following indicators shall be observed in determining best practices for community-based projects/programs..

A. **RESPONSIVENESS** – the quality of the project/program meets the needs of the beneficiaries and the community along the following:

1. Culture based – the project/program is sensitive to the practices, traditions, and beliefs of the community.

2. Needs based – the project/program can respond to identified emerging needs of the people.

3. Rights based – the project/program beneficiaries are accorded basic social services which can help improve their lives

4. Area focused – the project/program adopts the principle of individuality or uniqueness of one area from the other

B. **INNOVATIVENESS**

1. The project/program demonstrates "new" and innovative strategies/techniques, approaches, models

2. The project/program introduces new ways or procedures in addressing an issue

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C. **EFFECTIVENESS** - the project/program is responsible for the improvement on the lives of the direct beneficiaries (individual, families or groups) and the community:

1. *Direct Beneficiaries* – refers to an individual or group whose condition was improved as a consequence of the enabling effects of the project along the following aspects:

   a. **Social** – their ability to relate with others and form cooperative and interdependent relationships with other people in the community

   b. **Emotional** – their ability to express their feelings

   c. **Moral/Spiritual** – their ability to distinguish right from wrong and take responsibility for their actions

   d. **Physical** – their ability to care for themselves and provide for their needs

   e. **Learnings** – their ability to undertake tasks involving complex concepts/technical knowledge

2. *Community* – improvement of community is evidenced by the following:

   a. It has organized/strengthened structures

   b. It has functional structures with existing plans

   c. The people in the community participates in the activities being undertaken by the project

   d. It has supportive barangay leaders

   e. The people initiates resource generation activities to support the project

   f. The people has enhanced capacities to undertake technically complex tasks

   g. Other stakeholders in the community participates in project/program activities.

D. **TRANSPARENCY** – every amount spent on the project/program is presented to the public through a multi-level monitoring system with participation of NGOs.

E. **SUSTAINABILITY** – the program has capability to continue implementation even after phase out of national support

   1. ***Institutional Sustainability*** – ensuring that stakeholders are technically and efficiently capable of managing the project through the following:

      b. creating a strong commitment to program goals/able to come up with O and M plan

      c. involvement of communities and all stakeholders/able to operationalize their O and M plan

      d. regular conduct of capacity building activities

      e. with sustained collaborative mechanism

   2. ***Financial sustainability*** – with stabilizing the financial capability/capacity of LGUs and communities to deliver services through the following:

      a. broadening of donor base which include other national and local GAs and NGAs, NGOs, corporations/companies, foundations and individuals like wealthy individuals in the community

      b. stimulate creative fund raising activities

      c. setting a long term financial allocation for the program by the LGU and other donors

      d. able to establish a sustainable self revenue generating projects

F. **RECORDS MANAGEMENT** – this refers to the processes or activities which involves preparation of records and documents needed in the implementation of the project/program.

These records which are updated and readily available shall include the following:

1. project proposal
2. project manual or guidelines
3. personnel records
4. work and financial plan
5. minutes of the meeting
6. project physical performance
7. project financial performance
8. staffing and training
9. administrative procedures
10. social case study report
11. networking activities with LGUs, academe, business and religious group
12. anecdotal records or project impact on beneficiaries

VII. DEVELOPMENT OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

A corresponding instrument which shall be used for assessment of project/program based on the above-mentioned indicator shall be developed by concerned unit.

VIII. DOCUMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICES

The success stories and experiences of project/program beneficiaries and implementers shall be documented by the implementing Bureau/Office in coordination with Social Marketing Service for program development, training, research and advocacy. If it is a pilot project, documentation can be done after the pilot testing in the form of compendium/or casebook of success stories, video documentation, before its replication and nationwide implementation.

On the other hand, if the program has been implemented nationwide, documentation can be done through an evaluation study before its adoption by the local government units (LGUs) or non-government organizations (NGOs).

IX.   EFFECTIVITY

This order shall take effect immediately.

CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
Secretary

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