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Department of Social Welfare and Development

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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

No. 13

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SUBJECT: DSWD POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

I. Background and Rationale

The development of policies to promote the rights and welfare of the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors is a primary function of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)¹. Under its Refined Major Final Output (MFO), the DSWD is tasked to develop and advocate policies that will provide direction to partners, intermediaries and implementers of social protection services. Corollary to such function is the responsibility to review and advocate for just and responsive social welfare and development (SWD) policies and plans, as well as to ensure their effective implementation.

Addressing SWD policy concerns must be done with an in-depth and extensive analysis pursuant to the DSWD Reform Agenda that mentions the enhancement of evidence-based policy making as a component part of *Reform Area 1: Engaging and leading the sector in establishing strategic and result-oriented policies in social protection*. Naturally, effective policies on social protection should be anchored on a solid policy analysis that would look into the risks, efficacy of programs in order to formulate appropriate responses.

In practice, DSWD policy issuances are crafted based on studies, researches and evaluation of reliable sources from internal documents, academic studies and the internet. However, it is observed that policy analysis is often made in haste as a consequence of the various daily urgent and intervening tasks that need to be carried out by DSWD. As a result, some policy guidelines issued by the DSWD are either amended in just within a year or remanded to proponent Offices, Bureaus, Services and Units (OBSUs) for further enhancement.

Admittedly, a strategy in studying and discussing policy issues is sorely needed to provide an opportunity for different DSWD bureaus, offices, and field offices to gather information on emerging SWD issues and identify gaps and problem areas in current SWD laws, DSWD programs and services.

Further, there is a need to review the substantive portion of draft policy issuances crafted by different OBSUs and Field Offices to ensure that it is in accordance with the national commitments of DSWD and the specific tasks/assignments from the Philippine Government's international and regional commitments. There is also the need to make certain that the draft issuances are rights-based and they do not contradict previous DSWD policy issuances unless its purpose is to revoke or repeal previous issuance.

¹ Executive Order no. 15, series of 1989 (Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development)

The function of reviewing draft policy issuances shall be lodged with the Policy Development and Planning Bureau (PDPB) of DSWD, in line with its mandate to provide leadership in formulating policies of DSWD as well as policies related to social protection sector, especially those along social welfare and development, and social safety nets.

Given these developments, policy reforms that respond to issues confronting the SWD sector must be effectively promoted. It is therefore essential to establish a comprehensive and integrated policy development framework that will guide OBSUs and Field Offices in crafting policy issuances. Likewise, the framework will rationalize the policy papers, policy notes and position papers issued by DSWD.

II. Objectives

This Administrative Order aims to rationalize and provide a clear guideline on the process and strategies of developing policy issuances. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Institutionalize the conduct of policy analysis in the development of DSWD policy issuances;
2. Provide a standard definition or description of the different policy documents and policy activities conducted in the development of policy issuances; and
3. Provide a distinction on the nature of policies expected to be developed by the PDPB as regards to that of other OBSUs.

III. Coverage

This Administrative Order shall apply to all Central and Field Offices when crafting policy issuances. These policy issuances are categorized as follows:

- a. SWD Issuances – these are draft bills, position papers and policy papers/notes that aim to address issues at the national level. These issuances pertain to Social Protection, the Philippine Development Plan, DSWD Inputs to Country Statements on International/Regional Concerns, and national SWD legislations;
- b. Administrative Issuances – these are policies and guidelines internal to DSWD such as the operation and implementation of programs, projects and services of DSWD.

Guidelines and issuances that are purely administrative in nature (e.g. assignment or transfer of personnel, observance or compliance of offices, officials, and employees) are exempted from the coverage of this Administrative Order. On the other hand, development of policy issuances, which are direct instructions from The Secretary, should follow the procedure provided in this framework.

IV. Legal Bases

Executive Order No. 15 series of 1989 (Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development) emphasizes the role of the DSWD as the lead public sector agency in the development of SWD policies and mandates the

formulation and advocacy of a just and responsive social welfare and development legislative agenda, policies and plans, as well as ensuring their effective implementation.

DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 5 series of 2010 (The DSWD Reform Agenda) calls for the development of evidence-based and results-oriented policies on social protection as one of the main strategies towards providing better, faster and smarter social protection programs to the poor and vulnerable.

DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 1 series of 2012 (Re-clustering of Offices, Bureaus Services and Units [OBSUs] at the DSWD Central Office) states that the Policy Development and Planning Bureau (PDPB) is primary responsible in providing leadership in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and plans of DSWD and of the social protection sector along social welfare and development and social safety nets. It also mandates the PDPB to coordinate the development and promotion of the policy reform and legislative agenda of DSWD.

DSWD Administrative Order No. 3 series of 2014 (Guidelines and Protocols for DSWD Issuances) provides for the conduct of complete staff work that should be undertaken by proponent OBSU for its proposed administrative issuance. Complete staff work includes preparatory activities such as consultations with stakeholders that may be affected, if any, and with other concerned Field Offices (FOs) and/or OBSUs.

V. Definition of Terms

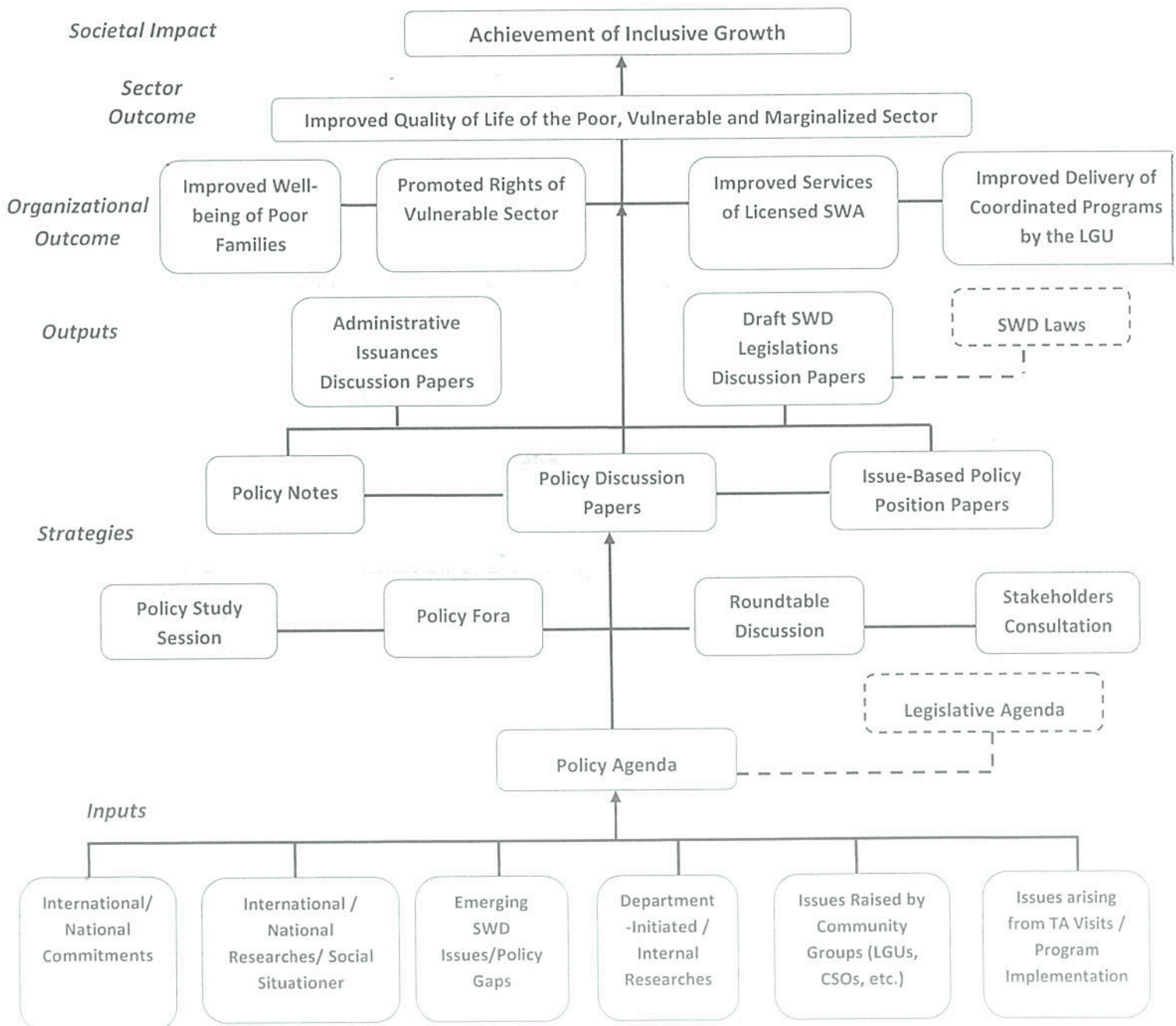
- a. **Policy Guidelines** – Are rules and regulations issued to carry out DSWD’s mandates. It is designed to supplement provisions of a certain law and to provide means for implementing the law. DSWD policy guidelines are referred to as Administrative Issuances pursuant to Administrative Order No. 3 series of 2014.
- b. **Policy Development Framework**– Refers to the set of principles, long term goals, processes and strategies that are undertaken or considered when making rules and guidelines. It provides an over-all direction in the formulation and issuance of DSWD’s policy guidelines.
- c. **Policy Agenda** – A document that outlines the priority SWD issues and concerns that need appropriate policy responses from DSWD.
- d. **Policy Analysis** – Refers to the process and strategies employed in identifying possible policy alternatives to address a particular SWD issue/concern vis-à-vis the mandate and long term goals of DSWD.
- e. **DSWD Legislative Agenda** – A document which outlines the legislative priorities of the DSWD for the current Congress. It contains, among others, the DSWD priority legislations, legislations requiring DSWD’s major participation and legislations requiring DSWD’s inputs.

VI. Description and Elements of the Policy Development Framework

DSWD shall continuously promote, both at the international and national levels, an environment for the development of policies that will uphold the rights of the disadvantaged sectors of society.

The Policy Development Framework sets the different components, approaches and strategies in generating discussions or mainstreaming current and emerging SWD issues. It also includes the gaps identified in existing DSWD policies and programs. The framework is expected to pave way to the development of more responsive DSWD guidelines that would ultimately contribute to the goal of having an improved quality of life of the poor and vulnerable sectors.

The framework is anchored on the overarching framework on Social Protection as well as on the Results Framework of DSWD.



The framework consists of the following components:

A. Societal Impact and Sector Outcome

It is essential that policies developed by DSWD are geared towards attaining an “Improved quality of life of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized sectors,” which would directly contribute to the achievement of an Inclusive Growth. This is consistent with DSWD’s goal as stated in the DSWD Overall Results Framework, which is also the contribution of DSWD to the country’s societal goal as reflected in the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016. It also takes into consideration the Social Impact of DSWD, which is stipulated in the Performance Governance System (PGS) by 2030. DSWD will be the lead shepherd in the improvement of quality of life.² This is in line with DSWD’s vision to be the world’s standard for the delivery of coordinated social services and social protection for poverty reduction by 2030.

B. Organizational Outcomes

The outcomes identified in the framework are aligned with the four (4) organizational outcomes of DSWD. Policy development is envisioned to eventually result in the following: 1) well-being of poor families improved; 2) rights of vulnerable sectors promoted; 3) services of licensed social welfare agencies improved; and 4) delivery of coordinated social welfare programs of local government units improved.

C. Policy Development Outputs

The outputs of DSWD along policy development are the following:

1) **Administrative Issuances** - DSWD’s administrative issuances are *“official documents issued by the Department that either (a) prescribe policies, rules and regulations, and procedures promulgated pursuant to law, applicable to individuals and organizations outside the government and designed to supplement provisions of the law or to provide means for carrying them out, including information relating thereto, or (b) direct particular offices, officials, or employees, concerning specific matters including assignments, detail and transfer of personnel, for observance or compliance by all concerned.”*³ Administrative issuances can be classified as Memorandum Circulars and Administrative Orders.

2) **SWD Issuances** - refer to draft bills and policy notes/papers that seek to address social welfare and development issues. Bills that benefit the poor, vulnerable and marginalized sectors, and other SWD issues, fall under this category. These bills shall be endorsed to the members of the Congress and advocacy for the enactment of proposed bills shall be supported by the DSWD.

² Department of Social Welfare and Development Results Framework. (September 2014)

³ DSWD Administrative Order No. 3, series of 2014 “Guidelines and Protocols for DSWD Issuances”

Aside from administrative issuances and SWD issuances, the following are also considered as policy development outputs of DSWD:

1. **Policy Discussion Paper** – A policy document that focuses on a) current issues needing attention or issuance of a new policy or b) existing policy but needs to be amended in some aspects citing gaps in policy implementation; and c) alternative actions/policy options or recommendations to address emerging concerns/issues. These papers are submitted to concerned OBSUs as basis for enhancement of existing guidelines or as possible subjects for discussion in policy fora or policy study sessions.
2. **Policy Notes** - A policy document that reviews existing policy intervention, elaborates shortcomings/gaps of policy interventions, provides a breakdown of specific steps or measures to address the policy issue in focus, and emphasizes the importance of taking action. Policy notes can be formulated as a result of policy study sessions and policy fora. The policy notes are disseminated to all DSWD OBS, field offices, attached agencies and other concerned agencies/organizations.
3. **Position Paper** - A policy document that presents and/or clarifies the stand of DSWD on specific SWD issues. The paper also provides possible policy options as well as a plan of action that can be undertaken by DSWD to address the issue in focus. The paper shall be forwarded to concerned partner agencies and organizations.

A proposed outline (ANNEX A) for each policy document is attached as part of the Administrative Order.

D. Strategies in Policy Development and Analysis

Various strategies are in place to facilitate the development of the policy outputs:

1. **Roundtable Discussions (RTDs)** – An inter-office/bureau meeting to discuss and brainstorm about emerging issues needing policy interventions. This can also be a venue to identify possible topics for discussion in policy fora or policy study sessions.
2. **Policy Forum** - A half day presentation of issues by experts and discussion with relevant agencies and organizations aimed at gathering or developing concrete policy recommendations and plan of action to address an emerging SWD issue or an identified gap in the implementation of an SWD law. Policy forum is distinct from the Social Welfare and Development Forum spearheaded by the Capacity Building Bureau.

As per DSWD Memorandum Circular no. 11, series of 2008, “*Guidelines on the Conduct of SWD Forum*”, SWD Fora “*provide avenues for learning by creating a medium for information exchange on relevant profession expertise, experiences and best practices on SWD on policies, programs, strategies and health concerns.*”

3. **Stakeholders Consultation** – A consultative activity aimed at involving social welfare and development stakeholders in identifying SWD issues requiring actions, policy recommendations, and options to address emerging concerns of SWD sector. As distinguished from a Policy Forum, the primary objective of the consultation is the

determination of current/intervening SWD issues faced by the SWD sector which are not included in the Policy Agenda but need immediate policy action from DSWD.

4. **Policy Study Session** - A two to three-day discussion-workshop for selected staff from DSWD OBS, field offices and attached agencies aimed at providing a venue to discuss and analyze current SWD policy gaps and issues that need immediate and well-grounded response from DSWD. This activity also aims to enhance the knowledge and capacity of staff in responding to emerging SWD policy issues

These policy outputs and strategies are inter-related in such a way that a policy document may result in the conduct of a policy activity (e.g. policy discussion paper presented in a policy study session or policy forum) or the drafting of another policy document (e.g. policy notes calling for the drafting of a position paper on a particular SWD issue) before the desired guidelines or proposed legislation may be developed. In the same manner that the policy fora/study sessions/RTDs may result to the drafting of a policy document calling for a specific development of new DSWD guidelines or the conduct of another policy activity to further discuss the SWD issue/concern.

E. The Policy Agenda

The PDPB shall develop a three-year Policy Agenda that will serve as a guide in planning policy initiatives and developing policies that seek to address current and emerging needs and concerns of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the society.

The Agenda shall consist of issues and concerns in the SWD area that need appropriate policy responses by DSWD based on the following sources:

- a. International, regional and national commitments;
- b. Results and recommendations from international and national researches, as well as social situationer;
- c. Emerging SWD issues and policy gaps;
- d. DSWD-initiated researches based on its Research Agenda;
- e. Issues raised by community groups (LGUs, CSOs, etc.); and
- f. Issues arising from TA Visits or Program Implementation.

The Policy Agenda shall also be used as a major source in the development of the annual Legislative Agenda of DSWD pursuant to Administrative Order 06 series of 2014.

VII. Policy Development Process

This Administrative Order shall complement the process in the formulation of administrative issuances provided for in AO 03 series of 2014 (Guidelines and Protocols for DSWD Issuances) by ensuring that the formulation of administrative and SWD issuances shall include a thorough policy analysis through the application of the strategies identified in this framework. Likewise, the issuances will be subjected to a final review by PDPB as the Management Committee (MANCOM) Secretariat, before it is submitted to the MANCOM Members for deliberation (ANNEX B).

a. *Situational Analysis*

This includes the review of current policies and laws, both national and international, and identification of emerging SWD issues based on reports from FOs, CSOs and research results.

b. *Agenda Setting*

The prioritization of issues and concerns based on the result of the situational analysis, international, regional commitments as well as national policies (e.g. Philippine Development Plan, National Management Development Committee and Secretary's Directives, DSWD Thrusts and Priorities, Strategic Goals, and Social Protection issues), which will lead to the development of the Policy Agenda.

c. *Policy Analysis*

SWD concerns and issues identified in the Policy Agenda shall be subjected to the different strategies of policy analysis (conduct of policy fora, study sessions, RTDs and consultations) for the issuance of appropriate policy document that may lead to the drafting of an administrative issuance by the relevant OBSU or the drafting of an applicable SWD issuance.

d. *Policy Formulation*

This includes drafting policies (guidelines/bills) by proponent OBSUs/FOs and endorsing it to the Management Committee (ManCom) and Executive Committee (ExeCom) for approval. This process flow for the approval of guidelines is provided for in AO 3 series of 2014 (Guidelines and Protocols for DSWD Issuances).

The PDPB, being the lead Bureau for issues/concerns on Social Protection, the Philippine Development Plan, DSWD Inputs to County Statements on International/Regional Concerns as well as the formulation of National SWD Legislations, shall be in charge of drafting policies and issuances relevant to the said areas.

Field Offices and other OBSUs shall be responsible for drafting administrative issuances relevant to implementation of their respective programs and services. The Field Offices shall also provide policy recommendations arising from the implementation of programs/projects/services to the PDPB for its inclusion in the Policy Agenda or the recommendations may be subjected to a policy analysis in order to address identified implementation gaps/issuances.

e. *Approval and Issuance*

This includes the review/deliberation and approval of the ManCom and ExeCom of the draft policy guidelines, culminating with the Secretary's signing of the same. This part of the process including the specific timelines is also provided in AO 3 s. 2014. However, this Policy Development Framework provides for an additional review of

the draft guidelines by PDPB as part of its ManCom Secretariat duties before said draft is deliberated by the ManCom members.

f. *Implementation*

An implementation plan should be prepared by the concerned OBSU/FO to identify the approaches in applying/carrying out the new or amended issuance.

The Implementation Plan shall reflect the activities with corresponding resources required (e.g. training, if necessary to incorporate new procedures. Additional costs/resources required to implement the policy/procedure, system constraints or changes required or any staff development needed; action steps to address the issues; responsible unit for each action steps and time line for completing each of the action steps).

g. *Monitoring and Evaluation*

The implementing OBSU/FO will have the overall responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the SWD or administrative issuances. In coordination with PDPB, the efficacy of the SWD and administrative issuances will be evaluated by the OBSU/FO. Issues and gaps that will arise in the course of monitoring and evaluation will be subjected to policy analysis and development, which will then be headed by PDPB in collaboration with the proponent OBSU/FO. The implementing OBS shall provide PDPB with feedback/issues/concerns on the implementation to facilitate policy analysis and formulation of policy recommendations.

VIII. Institutional Arrangement

Policy Development and Planning Bureau shall:

- a. Develop the Policy Agenda and monitor its implementation;
- b. Take the lead in policy analysis through the conduct of policy fora, study sessions, RTDs and stakeholder consultations, as well as in drafting policy documents and endorsement of said documents to intended users;
- c. Review draft issuances endorsed to the MANCOM, and prepare reports/recommendations for consideration of MANCOM members during the deliberation of draft issuances;
- d. Coordinate with the concerned OBSUs in the monitoring and evaluation of issued policies for identification of gaps and other areas for policy enhancement.
- e. Identify policy issues from the results of DSWD-initiated/Internal researches based on the Research Agenda; and
- f. Identify gaps on programs, projects and services that need policy actions based on the results of their monitoring and evaluation.

Field Offices and other Offices/Bureaus/Service/Units shall:

- a. Report to the PDPB all issues and policy recommendations arising from program/project implementation or Technical Assistance (TA) visits that may form part of the Policy Agenda;
- b. Actively participate in the conduct of different policy analysis activities;

- c. Draft and facilitate the endorsement, approval and implementation of Administrative Issuances relevant to their respective office functions and mandate; and
- d. Coordinate with PDPB in the monitoring and evaluation of policies implemented by their respective offices.

IX. Repealing Clause

All previous issuances contrary to or inconsistent with this Administrative Order are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

X. Effectivity

This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately.

Issued this 20th day of August 2015.


CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
Secretary *fee*

ANNEX A

Suggested Templates of Policy Documents

Policy Discussion Paper – shall be submitted one month before the forum or study session where it will be presented.

Suggested Outline:

Title

Must also include the activity and date when the paper will be presented for discussion.

Introduction

Provide a background on the nature of the issue/problem or urgent policy issue which needs to be addressed, briefly describing the issue/problem citing secondary data (i.e. research/study results, statistics/graphics, written reports/documentaries).

Existing Policies and/or Possible Alternatives

Provide a summary of existing policies and/or possible ways in which the problem/issue can be addressed. If there are existing policies, explain the failure of said policies in addressing the issue. If presenting possible alternatives, evaluate the probable outcomes of these alternatives that can serve as possible jumpstart for further discussion.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Provide recommendation on best possible policy alternative based on the evaluation of possible outcome and challenge readers to provide arguments to challenge recommendation and discuss other possible alternatives.

References

List of sources consulted or recommended.

ANNEX B

