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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 23
SERIES OF 2003

SUBJECT: **ADOPTION OF THE DSWD ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES**

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the Government's lead agency for social welfare and development. In August, 2002, DSWD put together its Rationalization and Streamlining Plan (RSP), a comprehensive document that attempts to put into motion the various departmental initiatives that would help actualize its mission, vision, and enhanced strategic thrusts. The RSP reaffirms DSWD's commitment to excellence in the fulfillment of its dual role as lead policy formulator, advocate and monitor of national policies, plans and programs and standards on social welfare and development, and as a direct service provider.

DSWD recognizes that underpinning its ability to fulfill its vision, mission and strategic thrusts is the maintenance of a functional organizational structure and the nurturance of professional and support staff who are adequately prepared to take on the changing demands and challenges facing DSWD. In January 2003, the DSWD embarked on the pilot testing of the Career Development and Management System (CDMS), which is an organized, formalized, planned process of striking a healthy balance between individual career needs and organizational workforce requirements. The CDMS involves mutual support, careful planning, consistent implementation and objective monitoring.

An essential component of the CDMS is the articulation of the DSWD Organizational Competencies. These are the unique factors that are fundamental to DSWD and its success. They enable the DSWD to fulfill its mandate, mission and vision. They also serve as indicators of DSWD's overall organizational quality which, in turn, guides prospective and/or current employees in their decision on whether it is their employer of choice.

To validate these Organizational Competencies, the DSWD embarked on an extensive consultation with its officials, employees, Field Offices and external stakeholders.

For the guidance and information of the DSWD, its personnel, attached agencies and intermediaries, which include local government units, non-

governmental organizations and people's organizations, the following Organizational Competencies are hereby adopted:

1. **SWD POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

   The Department effectively plays a leadership role in moving the Government's SWD policy agenda forward from conceptualization to legislation, implementation and evaluation. Using the most reliable tools and data sources for policy research, development, and communication, the Department proactively identifies local and global trends that might impact on the development of public policies affecting, and/or the delivery of programs and services to, the country's vulnerable populations; analyzes the results of environmental scans and research data; and communicates them, in meaningful form, to relevant stakeholders.

2. **STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT**

   In consultation with its stakeholders and in recognition of universally accepted norms of quality service and program delivery, the Department establishes standards for compliance by its own projects, centers and institutions, as well as its intermediaries and other sectors of civil society. In developing standards, the Department is constantly guided by principles of professional accountability, personal and professional ethics, protection of the public, and empowerment of the disadvantaged. The Department engages its stakeholders in dialogue over the development of appropriate standards, educates them on the necessity of adherence, and monitors compliance.

3. **ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF VULNERABLE SECTORS**

   The Department consistently demonstrates a total concern for the protection and empowerment of the vulnerable sectors of the population. The Department's programs and services have a clear advocacy orientation, supported by a comprehensive and functional public education program. The Department proactively influences the Legislative Agenda, as well as its network of stakeholders, towards the development of policies, services and programs that enhance the protection and the empowerment of the country's most vulnerable sectors. A system

of effective evaluation of programs and services for vulnerable populations is in place.

4. NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Department works closely with its intermediaries and stakeholders towards the enhancement of their mutual capabilities to deliver people-empowering programs and services. The Department actively promotes among its networks and partners technical assistance and resource augmentation (TARA), program collaboration, policy consultation, and information sharing.

5. DIRECT SERVICE DELIVERY/TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

The Department develops and implements pilot projects that are deemed urgent for, and/or crucial to, the amelioration of certain social problems. Employing competent staff and the best available program technology to deliver the required program processes, the Department uses such pilot programs as social laboratories structured for meaningful observation and study. The Department ensures that all pilot projects adhere to at least the minimum standards of efficiency, accountability, and excellence expected of other programs in the community. The Department contributes to the growth of the professional field of SWD by sharing, with its network of intermediaries and stakeholders, the "best practice" lessons learned from its programs and services. The Department facilitates the timely phase-out of its pilot community-based programs to another agency.

6. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Department is unequivocally focused on its vision, mission, and mandate. Fully cognizant of environmental factors that impact on the development of policies, as well as the delivery of services and programs, affecting vulnerable populations, the Department adopts a state-of-the-art management information system and progressive administrative processes that help to maintain or improve its capacity to respond to current and emerging challenges. It employs competent staff to carry out its mandate, nurturing them towards a sense of personal pride and professional fulfillment under an atmosphere that is just,

sensitive, humane, accountable, transparent, and responsible. The Department reinforces its image as a leader in steering and rowing functions by responding quickly and effectively in crisis situations, by excelling in the stewardship of its human, financial and material resources, and by strategically positioning itself as an agency of excellence in the field of SWD.

For further clarification and explanation of the organizational competencies, an annotated version is hereby attached and shall be made an integral part of this Circular.

This Circular takes effect immediately and supersedes, amends or modifies previous issuances inconsistent herewith. Copies of this Circular shall be disseminated to all the bureaus, services, and offices at the Central Office, Field Offices and attached DSWD agencies.

Issued in Quezon City, this 27th day of June 2003.

CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
Secretary, DSWD

A CERTIFIED COPY:

RENATO F. GILERA
Records Officer III

DSWD ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Competency Statement	Annotation
SWD POLICY DEVELOPMENT The Department effectively plays a leadership role in moving the Government's SWD policy agenda forward from conceptualization to legislation, implementation and evaluation. Using the most reliable tools and data sources for policy research, development, and communication, the Department proactively identifies local and global trends that might impact on the development of public policies affecting, and/or the delivery of programs and services to, the country's vulnerable populations; analyzes the results of environmental scans and research data; and communicates them, in meaningful form, to relevant stakeholders.	▪ Social Welfare & Development (SWD) is a specialized field whose basic concepts and principles are relevant to the Philippine context. DSWD has the expertise in assisting the Government of the Philippines develop and implement SWD-related public policies. ▪ This competency statement is consistent with DSWD's Rationalization and Streamlining Plan (RSP) submission to DBM, to the effect that DSWD will conduct basic policy research. It is then wide open for DSWD to develop its research policies and strategies—e.g., when to purchase external research services, when to commission specific research work, or when to conduct internal research activities. ▪ The concept of "evaluation" includes the process of monitoring. ▪ Although DSWD's target groups are the country's "vulnerable populations", it is incumbent upon the Department to identify those groups that are more vulnerable than the others and, therefore, would require more urgent attention. ▪ DSWD's stakeholders—both inside and outside government circles—look up to it to interpret important research data for them. Wherever and whenever appropriate, DSWD will promote use of research data/ findings; however, it should be recognized that certain research data may not be of interest or use to certain stakeholders. ▪ This calls for an institutional capability to analyze existing policies (both internal and external) and expertise in policy development and social research.

Competency Statement	Annotation
STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT In consultation with its stakeholders and in recognition of universally accepted norms of quality service and program delivery, the Department establishes standards for compliance by its own projects, centers and institutions, as well as its intermediaries and other sectors of civil society. In developing standards, the Department is constantly guided by principles of professional accountability, personal and professional ethics, protection of the public, and empowerment of the disadvantaged. The Department engages its stakeholders in dialogue over the development of appropriate standards, educates them on the necessity of adherence, and monitors compliance.	▪ DSWD is concerned with two levels of standards—(a) professional competencies, and (b) service standards, which includes norms relating to physical facilities. ▪ DSWD is fully aware of global developments with regard to SWD standards. ▪ DSWD recognizes the existence of SWD expertise among its stakeholders; however, they look up to the Department's leadership on matters relating to standards development, promotion, implementation and compliance monitoring. ▪ Standards development suggests the adoption of a functional Quality Assurance program in DSWD. This would address, among others, the issue of regulating the practice of social workers. ▪ The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) deals with the licensing of social workers as professionals, but no agency regulates the practice of social workers in the actual setting. ▪ Executive Order 330 allows those who have no benefit of social work diploma to be given the equivalent education. PRC has already accredited schools for Expanded Tertiary Educational Equivalency Program (ETEEP) and this can be used as a substitute to the taking of a board exam. ▪ A major challenge is how to encourage LGUs and other implementing agencies to comply with SWD standards of practice. The Department may wish to consider holding a series of consultations with LGUs and other implementing agencies on the subject of DSWD's organizational competencies, in general, and the entire continuum of standards development, implementation and monitoring, in particular.

Competency Statement	Annotation
STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT (continued)	▪ It is recognized that, in particular circumstances, DSWD employs volunteers to perform certain functions in some of its programs. The Department might need to revisit its policies and procedures affecting volunteers to ensure that no standards are compromised, as a result of their involvement. ▪ This organizational competency calls for internal expertise in the complementary fields of standards development and quality assurance Intricately embedded in these fields are the processes of standards promotion and compliance monitoring.

Competency Statement	Annotation
ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF VULNERABLE SECTORS The Department consistently demonstrates a total concern for the protection and empowerment of the vulnerable sectors of the population. The Department's programs and services have a clear advocacy orientation, supported by a comprehensive and functional public education program. The Department proactively influences the Legislative Agenda, as well as its network of stakeholders, towards the development of policies, services and programs that enhance the protection and the empowerment of the country's most vulnerable sectors. A system of effective evaluation of programs and services for vulnerable populations is in place.	▪ All DSWD staff (including external consultants) are infused with a genuine sense of advocacy for vulnerable populations. ▪ The objectives for a system-wide program of orientation and continuing education for staff include, among others, the further development of their understanding of, and sensitivity to, the plight of the country's vulnerable populations. ▪ DSWD has a lot of proactive programs that have been cited by professional and government circles for their innovation and effectiveness—e.g., CIDSS, effective parenting and childcare. However, it does not seem to have done enough to educate its stakeholders—particularly the general public—with regard to these success stories. ▪ The Department needs to enhance its public education capability, utilizing the popular media and other public fora more aggressively.

Competency Statement	Annotation
NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS The Department works closely with its intermediaries and stakeholders towards the enhancement of their mutual capabilities to deliver people-empowering programs and services. The Department actively promote among its networks and partners technical assistance and resource augmentation (TARA), program collaboration, policy consultation, and information sharing.	▪ DSWD recognizes the expertise of its intermediaries and stakeholders in the field of SWD. ▪ SWD programs and services that empower people are culturally and gender-sensitive, age-appropriate, and dignity affirming. Furthermore, these programs and services are client-oriented and, therefore, are developed solely based on their identified needs. ▪ DSWD's stakeholders have identified the critical need for a central repository for "best practice" models and other relevant information on SWD practices in the Philippines. They are calling on DSWD to be the lead agency in developing this service. This could lead to DSWD's being recognized as a government agency that is really on the cutting edge of public education and information exchange. ▪ DSWD endeavors to translate its own "best practice" models in popular forms and to make them available for public access through its own library system. ▪ There is a need for a regularly held forum for the exchange of information about "best practice" models and the latest developments in SWD practice in the Philippines. ▪ A functional MIS program enables DSWD to be linked to a global network of information about "best practice" models.

Competency Statement	Annotation
DIRECT SERVICE DELIVERY/TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY The Department develops and implements pilot projects that are deemed urgent for, and/or crucial to, the amelioration of certain social problems. Employing competent staff and the best available program technology to deliver the required program processes, the Department uses such pilot programs as social laboratories structured for meaningful observation and study. The Department ensures that all pilot projects adhere to at least the minimum standards of efficiency, accountability, and excellence expected of other programs in the community. The Department contributes to the growth of the professional field of SWD by sharing, with its network of intermediaries and stakeholders, the "best practice" lessons learned from its programs and services. The Department facilitates the timely phase-out of its pilot community-based programs to another agency.	▪ It is recognized that the existing centers and institutions are still being managed by DSWD's regional offices because it is so mandated by law. ▪ "Meaningful observation and study" includes the process of evaluation and its monitoring sub-component. ▪ In many cases, DSWD is prepared to phase out or transfer a particular service; however, potential implementing agencies refuse to take over its operation because of funding problems. This raises the issue of service sustainability. ▪ DSWD considers the organizational competencies of the receiving agency before finally phasing out a particular service. ▪ The orderly transfer of a pilot program to a community-based agency precludes reasonable efforts to ensure that the said program is adopted and sustained by the intended recipients.

Competency Statement	Annotation
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT The Department is unequivocally focused on its vision, mission, and mandate. Fully cognizant of environmental factors that impact on the development of policies, as well as the delivery of services and programs, affecting vulnerable populations, the Department adopts a state-of-the-art management information system and progressive administrative processes that help to maintain or improve its capacity to respond to current and emerging challenges. It employs competent staff to carry out its mandate, nurturing them towards a sense of personal pride and professional fulfillment under an atmosphere that is just, sensitive, humane, accountable, transparent, and responsible. The Department reinforces its image as a leader in steering and rowing functions by responding quickly and effectively in crisis situations, by excelling in the stewardship of its human, financial and material resources, and by strategically positioning itself as an agency of excellence in the field of SWD.	▪ DSWD policies and procedures reflect its unbending respect for the dignity and human rights of individuals. ▪ The "DSWD culture" continues to showcase a wholesome and proactive partnership between management and non-management staff. SWEAP and other official or employee groups are seen as full partners in the fulfillment of the Department's mission, vision and mandate. ▪ One of DSWD's biggest challenges is the development of a state-of-the-art Management Information System (MIS). Everyone is cognizant of the fact that MIS, per se, requires significant funding. ▪ The Career Pathing model and the broader Career Development and Management System that are being developed for DSWD reflect DSWD's commitment to continue addressing employees' career concerns. ▪ The support systems required by staff vary according to their circumstances—e.g., regions constantly facing natural or man-made disasters need a sustained program of crisis management for staff, while the other regions might be focusing on developing crisis intervention skills for application in their programs and services. ▪ DSWD staff in some regions do not have access to adequate training programs at the graduate level. This leads to serious difficulties meeting the academic requirements of certain jobs in the system (i.e., those requiring at least a Master's degree). Distance Education is not an option for many of them, since it requires the use of a reliable computer and access to the Internet.

Competency Statement	Annotation
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)	▪ The capability of the Department to create permanent staffing positions are contingent on adequate government funding. ▪ For DSWD's administrative processes to be progressive, the Department commits itself to regular or periodic review of its policies and procedures. It also commits itself to a continuing education, orientation and/or training for each staff.