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Memorandum Circular No. 5
Series of 2005

DSWD STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2015

I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Social Welfare and Development is committed to deliver its mandate and position itself to be the lead in the field of social welfare and development.

As the Department embarks on this mission, certain conditions and factors in the environment may hinder or facilitate the realization of set goals and objectives. The success of DSWD as an organization lies on the synergetic action between these external factors and the Department's capability of adapting and / or overcoming these conditions. While current efforts and initiatives had been undertaken by the Department to respond to the challenges of time, it remains active in ensuring the formulation of and enhancement of programs and services in order to bring about social development in its truest form.

The formulation of the DSWD Strategic Plan as part of the DSWD Corporate Plan, provides a comprehensive process to place the Department in the right direction. The process includes environmental scanning, assessing of DSWD strengths and weaknesses, setting strategic direction, identifying deliverables and formulating actual strategies and action plans.

The Strategic Plan takes off from a scanning of DSWD's internal and external environment which laid down several major considerations both for the Department and its intermediaries / clients and partners. The results of the Consultative Forum last June 3, 2004, and the Rapid Assessment of DSWD programs and services for the DSWD Partner Agencies, Intermediaries and Clients using the Focused Group Discussions as well as the outputs from the NMDC workshop held on December 9 and 10, 2004 served as valuable inputs into the Department's strategic planning process. These series of consultation – workshops gave rise to different issues and concerns which became the basis for the formulation of the Strategic Plan (please refer to annexes).

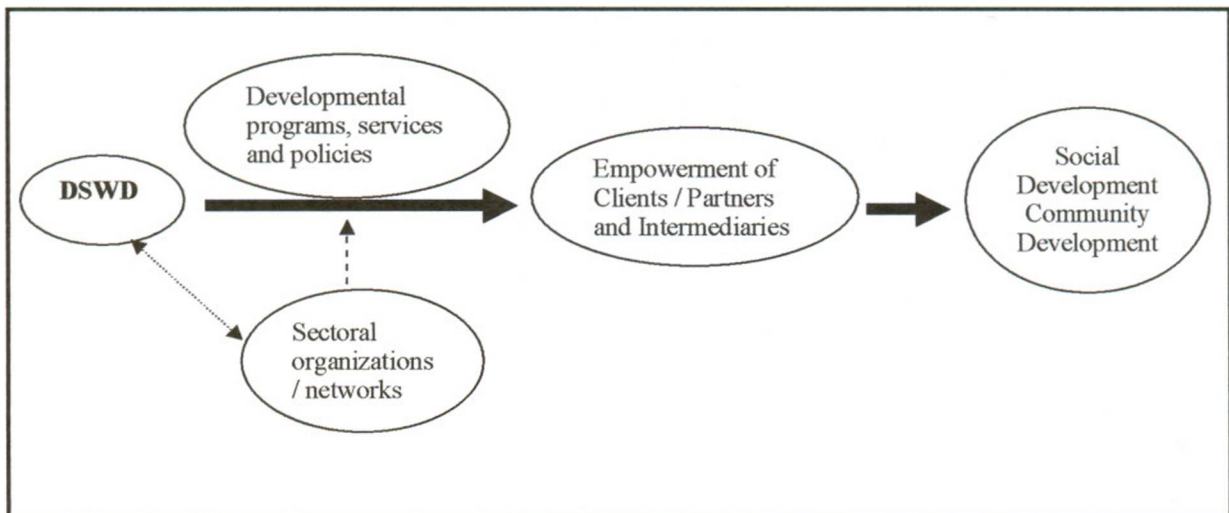
II. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

As its overarching guide, the Strategic Plan adopts the Framework of Action of Social Workers and Social Development Workers laid down by the Secretary, Corazon Juliano-

Soliman.* The framework outlines in broad strokes the different strategies that the Department must pursue in order to develop strong and self-reliant communities through the formulation and implementation of effective and community driven programs and services. These programs and services should result to the protection of and improvement of the well-being of vulnerable groups. Giving these sectors access to power and development can be affiliated by the presence of strong sectoral organizations that will advocate, monitor and implement laws for their protection.

While DSWD takes into prime consideration its clients, intermediaries and partners, it must likewise strengthen its own organizational development to effectively discharge its mission. It must strive for excellence and for the provision of quality services. This will be done through the implementation of effective training programs, the Rationalization and Streamlining Plan (RSP), as well as the enhanced Performance Management System (PMS) to ensure transparency and accountability at all levels.

The Framework :



III. GOALS :

For the Organization (DSWD)

1. Competent staff performing DSWD functions with confidence
2. Institutional capacity to become and remain a learning and dynamic organization

For the Intermediaries

3. SWD delivery systems are convergent, accessible to and create maximum impact of services among target beneficiaries

* Framework of Action for Social Workers and Social Development Workers, speech delivered by Secretary Corazon Juliano-Soliman, NMDC, DSWD, December 9-10, 2004.

4. Capacities of LGUs, NGOs and POs for the delivery of quality and adequate social services developed
5. Retained services and special projects are localized based on needs
6. Partners adopt and develop social technologies for local SWD services and projects
7. Participation of NGOs and Pos in social welfare and development institutionalization
8. Business, academe, church, media and rest of civil society share in the responsibility for reform and human development
9. LGUs to develop / modify SWD programs / interventions that suit local needs and culture

For the Constituency

10. The poor and the disadvantaged realized their individual and collective aspirations and become productive and contributing members of society through the mobilization of partners and stakeholder in the convergent delivery of social services
11. The rights of the poor and the vulnerable to quality services protected by setting and enforcing standards for SWD services

IV. MAJOR FINAL OUTPUTS AND STRATEGIES

To achieve the goals, the following major strategies and activities are laid down, based on the expected major final outputs of the Department.

Major Final Outputs and Strategies	Activities
A. Services relating to the formulation and advocacy of policies, plans and programs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of policies and passage of legislation addressing SWD issues and concerns • Advocacy of legislations/laws (national and local) • Review / revisit of existing laws such as PD 603, PD 1567, RA 6972 as to its applicability to current trends • Create interests and demand among LGU officials on the compliance of newly enacted laws • Monitoring of implementation of the laws • Strengthening of database and information system • Development of appropriate programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing advocacy for the passage of legislative bills related to national SWD (national and local legislation) • Collaborative legislative agenda • Involvement of stakeholders and other publics re: assessment of laws, policies and programs • Creation of TWG to review and study such laws, legislations for amendment • Intensifying popularization of SWD-related laws/policies • Mobilize and create local advocacy and monitoring groups or through sectoral groups for the implementation of national laws • Undertake researches / studies for and in

	<p>support of policy formulation/ program development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating and utilization of situationer as basis for planning and program development • Formulation / updating and monitoring of operational and sectoral plans • Creation, updating and promotion of data through the web and publication • Development of appropriate programs responsive to emerging issues
B. Standard Setting, Licensing and Accreditation Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Setting and Compliance Monitoring • Deputation of qualified individuals and organization to conduct assessment towards registration, licensing and accreditation of day care centers, other early childhood care and development centers, social welfare agencies and service providers • Strengthen technical cooperation with intermediaries and stakeholders • Provision of sustained technical assistance and support to the intermediaries and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing development and enrichment of standards • Strengthening and enrichment of ABSNET • Formulation of standards for delivery of specific social services • Advocacy for registration, licensing and accreditation • Registration, licensing and accreditation of social welfare agencies • Capability building of individuals and organizations on registration, licensing and accreditation of centers • Upgrading of DSWD centers and facilities per standards set • Upgrade centers and institutions and review rehabilitation programs towards self-reliance and independence • Evaluation / assessment of programs and services of LGUs, NGAs, POs, and other stakeholders • Installation of rewards system to various stakeholders and sanctions for non-compliance • Rationalize requirements of licensing and accreditation • Sharing of best practices among stakeholders • Establishment of resource link among stakeholders through data banking
C. Provision of support services and technical assistance to intermediaries	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance functional relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive capability building measures for

<p>between LGUs and DSWD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure delivery of TARA and generate cost-sharing with LGUs through TARA Plan crafting and forging of MOA • Capability building and technical assistance • Enhancement of capacities of the LGUs, NGOs and POs for the delivery of quality and adequate social services • Localization and divestment of special programs and projects • Resource mobilization and generation 	<p>intermediaries/partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of programs that will respond to the emerging issues of the different sectors or review of existing programs to make it more responsive • Effective networking with LGUs, NGOs, POs, academe and civil society for purposes of programs and services planning, implementation and evaluation • Skills enhancement of devolved workers • Training on new programs developed by the Department localize special projects based on the absorptive capacity of the LGUs • Provision of appropriate budget by LGUs to SWD concerns • Cost sharing of FO initiated activities
<p>D. Provision of services for community and center-based clients</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development / pilot testing of social technologies • Enhance coordination and information sharing system • Promotion of rights-based and competency-based capability building for vulnerable sectors • Provide a systematic community-based programs for the vulnerable sectors • Strengthen partnership at regional and local partners • Improvement of facilities • Enhancement of centers / institutional programs and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous development of social technologies • Expansion / / implementation of KALAHI-CIDSS:KKB and ECD • Review of services for community-based and center-based clients vis a vis current needs and emerging issues • Capacity building for intermediaries and partners • Capacity building for vulnerable sectors • Intensify case management • Continuing provision of social services for community and center –based clients • Linkage with other intermediaries and regional bodies i.e. ASEAN, ESCAP • Repair of facilities • Review and upgrade programs for centers / institutions towards self-reliance and independence • Formulation and implementation of M & E and QA systems in DSWD
<p>E. Institutional Strengthening</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Rationalization and Streamlining Plan • Human resource development and management • Strengthen social marketing / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational development plan formulation and implementation • Enhancing the competencies of staff on such relevant matters such as effective technology transfer, advocacy, networking

<p>advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Communication Plan • Strengthen partnership and network development • Leveraging ICT for Mission-Critical Goals and objectives of DSWD as well as in management of relevant and significant data • Implementation of the Career Development and Management System • Institutionalization of Integrity Development Plan • Improvement of Internal Delivery System 	<p>/ partnerships, disaster planning and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous capability building of social workers and other development workers / paraprofessionals within five years (5 years based on TNA building) on the core competencies of the staff • Aggressive public education program promoting SWD principles and best practices • Continuing advocacy on SWD concerns • Formation and mobilization of multi-sectoral and non-traditional partners and alliances to serve as watchdogs in SWD programs and undertakings • Implementation of the on-line transaction system for frontline services • Information management for various sectors • Formulation, implementation and enhancement of career development plans • Conduct of career coaching, counseling and mentoring in support of career pathing • Implementation of a functional Performance Management System • Existence of functional policies and procedures affecting recruitment, transfer, promotion, compensation and benefits • Review of succession planning • Conduct of Orientation of Integrity Development Seminar • Creation of Integrity Circle • Improvement of Procurement System • Improvement of Property Management System • Improvement of Records Management
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V. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

To translate the Strategic Plan into concrete activities both at the central office and the field offices, a Five (5) Year Plan of Action (2005-2010) shall be developed by the different field offices and bureaus / units / service of the Department in accordance with the following format:

MFOs/Strategies	Activities	Expected Key Results	Targets	Focal Units

The Policy and Plans Bureau shall be primarily responsible for the provision of technical assistance to all offices in the preparation of their respective five year plans which shall be correspondingly submitted to the Policy and Plans Bureau every 1st month of the year.

Likewise, PPB shall also ensure timely updating of the DSWD Strategic Plan every five years.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The preparation of the five (5) year Plans of the different offices, bureaus and units shall become the basis for the annual monitoring of the Strategic Plan.

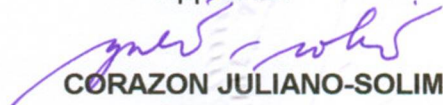
In order to monitor and evaluate the accomplishment of the Strategic Plan, the Policy and Plans Bureau shall, in collaboration with the concerned bureaus/units and field offices, gather the annual accomplishment reports / progress reports towards achieving the stated goals based on the given targets or indicators of success.

VII. EFFECTIVITY

This Circular shall take effect immediately.

Issued in Quezon City, this 21st day of February, 2005

Approved:


CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
 Secretary

ANNEXES

- A. **FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WORKERS (DELIVERED BY SECRETARY CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN DURING THE DECEMBER 9 & 10, 2004 NMDC)**
- B. **GAP/ISSUES IN DSWD SERVICES**
- **Results of the Consultative Forum (June 3, 2004)**
 - **Results of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on Assessing DSWD Programs and Services**
 - **Results of the FGD to Improve DSWD Programs and Services**
 - **Recommendations of the Consultant based on the Results of the FGD for Partners and Clients**

FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WORKERS (DELIVERED BY SECRETARY CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN DURING THE DECEMBER 9 & 10, 2004 NMDC)

Social workers and social development workers must focus their sights on the mission of providing social welfare, social protection, empowerment and development to the vulnerable and poor in our midst, who must also be our able partners in transforming their conditions.

The provision of an integrated and comprehensive system of social welfare programs, services and facilities will bring about sustainable improvements in the well-being of the vulnerable and poor individuals, families and communities and those with special needs. This will promote social development and the social functioning of people.

Their vulnerability must be addressed, and we must help the vulnerable sectors move out of their difficult circumstances. We can do this by upgrading and reviewing our centers' and institutions' rehabilitation programs, which should be instrumental in eliminating vulnerability by creating self-reliant and independent people.

Seeing how vulnerable sectors still need social protection while they learn to be self-reliant and independent, there must be a determined and systematic program to have community-based programs for the vulnerable sectors, so they can draw strength and protection from each other. There is always safety in numbers.

Leadership must be a coordinated intersectoral strategy for the formulation/implementation of policies, programs and laws to protect the rights and welfare of the poor from the consequences of their socio-political conditions. There must be a strong advocacy of legislation – especially of creative laws, both on the national and local levels – which will protect the rights of the vulnerable. Welfare policies and programs/services will be developed and promoted in partnership with LGUs. Of course, strong advocacy of legislation must also be accompanied by the monitoring of the implementation of the laws. Our strategies must ensure such effective implementation of the law.

Protecting the rights of the poor does not end with legislation. NGOs and the private sector must also develop programs that will respond to the emerging issues of the different sectors. We will review the existing programs to make them more responsive, and we will work towards making the LGU SWDO centers of excellence.

With policies and programs in place, we must then focus on providing community-driven development strategies. Such strategies should address the basic needs of the poor and vulnerable. The community development approach, philosophy, process, methods and skills will be used in strategies at the local level to meet the needs of the poor and the vulnerable, empower and develop them and their communities.

The development of family-centered and community-based programs will facilitate community development processes to promote increased access to services, improved coordination, local empowerment, and greater responsiveness to meeting the needs of responding to the challenge of reducing poverty.

Giving these sectors access to power and development can be affiliated by the presence of strong sectoral organizations that will advocate/monitor and implement laws for their

protection. In short, we must be able to communicate to them the message of hope and empowerment.

For the strengthening and right sizing of the Department, transparency and accountability at all levels will be maintained to strive for excellence and for the provision of quality services. The Enhanced Performance Management System will be in place. The RSP will be approved and implemented. Effective training programs to upgrade skills and increase human resource capacity in the delivery of developmental social programs and services will be developed.

A Five (5) Year Plan of Action shall be developed by the different field offices and bureaus / units / service of the Department in accordance to the DSWD Strategic Plan.

Lastly, throughout this framework of action for social workers and social development workers, there must be that prevailing sense of joyful and loyal service – our rallying cry of *magiliw na pagsisilbi sa sambayanan!* This framework will only be half as effective without such service in practice.

II. GAP/ISSUES IN DSWD SERVICES

A. Results of the Consultative Forum (June 3, 2004)

The individual reports from the workshop groups suggest several common themes.

- **Social Planning and Research.** The participants cited the unfortunate state of data collection and management in the Department, as well as in other Government agencies. They said that data bases on various sectors are outdated and unreliable. In some cases, even if certain data are available, access to such data is hampered by bureaucratic inefficiency.

Poverty Diagnosis/Reduction Tools. While the participants recognized that a number of poverty assessment and poverty reduction tools are available, some of which have been used in DSWD pilot projects, there is a lack of consistency and coherency across programs and regions, with regard to their use and replication.

Best Practices. The participants agreed that DSWD has accumulated through the years an impressive number of lessons learned from its service/program deliveries, either from the pilot version or the ongoing programs/services of centers and institutions. However, the Department continues to lag behind in its attempts to document and promote these “best practice” models.

- **Policy Development, Implementation and Monitoring.** The participants complemented the Department for its efforts to develop and promote policies and standards for the implementation of social welfare and development at the LGU level. At the same time, it was their common observation that there seems to be little, if any, political will to implement such policies at the LGU level. As a result, the sad realities of policy implementation at the local level do not reflect the intents of policies formulated at the national level. The devolution arrangements, which have given LGUs autonomy in their implementation of social welfare and development

programs/services, seem to have created a gap in monitoring the progress of their implementation.

The participants also identified a need for the Department to develop a quality assurance (QA) system that will cut across all SWD programs and services — whether they are run by DSWD or its intermediaries and partners. The adoption of QA would provide a critical framework for service monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring at the Field Office level should be strengthened particularly centers run by both government and non-government organizations. DSWD being the regulatory and standard setting body should see to it that its own centers are provided with sufficient funding, logistic and technical support for quality services in order to achieve the goal of having 'Centers of Excellence'.

- **Service Monitoring and Evaluation.** The participants recognized that, in principle, DSWD promotes the incorporation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes for all its programs/services. In fact, it is well known that internationally funded initiatives are required to build M&E into their operations. However, the Department does not have a well-defined M&E framework that is consistently implemented across the board. This has led to poor monitoring and evaluation practices affecting DSWD programs/services.
- **Capability Building for Intermediaries and Partners.** The participants expressed their serious concerns over what they perceive to be a generalized inadequacy on the part of the Department's intermediaries and partners to plan, implement and evaluate SWD programs and services. They reported that, in many cases, LGUs seem to be at a loss as to how to make the most of their SWD offices. Furthermore, in most cases, LGUs are not involved in the piloting process; as a result, they end up being "mere recipients" of programs/services piloted by DSWD. This condition of inadequate competencies is exacerbated by DSWD's failure to provide a thorough training/orientation to receiving LGUs.

One of the complicating problems identified by the participants is the lack of a fully-functioning information and communication technology (ICT) in DSWD—one that could facilitate linkages among the Department's many programs and services, as well as between the Department and its intermediaries, partners and stakeholders.

- **Capability Building for Vulnerable Sectors.** The participants stated that the process of empowering vulnerable sectors through organizational development has just begun. There remains a need for more comprehensive and relevant competency-training programs, as well as the provision of critical support services. The participants also reminded DSWD that each vulnerable sector is not a homogeneous group; often, there are competing sub-groups within.

Representatives of vulnerable sectors stated that the main problem they face is discrimination, as manifested in inadequate access to services (including employment) and poor quality of training programs.

- **Partnerships at the Regional and Local Levels.** The participants indicated that DSWD needs to strengthen its advocacy activities at the regional and local levels, particularly since that is the context of devolved programs/services. They stated that

many LGUs are not adequately educated about the rights of vulnerable sectors, let alone about how LGUs could promote and respect those rights.

B. Results of the Focus Group Discussion on Assessing DSWD Programs and Services

1. Partners

Issues and Problems

Access to Programs and Services

The issues of fairness and political influences were mentioned. Some participants perceived that cases referred and requests made by politicians had better and quicker access to DSWD programs and services.

Coordination and Communication

A good number of participants found that coordination and communication were inadequate or were not provided at all. It was pointed out that there was inadequate provision of data to users like NEDA and that information of when and how much assistance/subsidy will be given was not provided. Others claimed that there were delays in communicating requests for submissions, changes in schedules, seminar schedules and details regarding the participants. It was also pointed out that in the participants' region no proper orientation regarding newly enacted laws (eg Solo Parent Act) were held. Feedback on requests, proposal submissions, scholarship/training applications was also not provided. Related to systems and procedures, it was cited that DSWD would request for reports without attached forms or proposed formats.

It was also pointed out that the coordination in the area of disaster relief needed improvement. Confusions were experienced when communication and coordination did not pass through the usual channels or when the local SWs were not informed of the details of the distribution or when procedures were changed.

Facilities

The issue of insufficient facilities (too cramped or lack of facilities) was mentioned. That the CIU and Crisis Rape Center were not conducive for counseling or attending to cases of child rape was again mentioned. Facilities were lacking or absent for CIU cases (Person with disabilities or PWDs and mentally challenged persons).

Information Dissemination and Provision

The lack of information materials about programs and services, new laws and policies was often mentioned in the different regional FGDs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It was raised in a number of FGDs that monitoring and evaluation were not regularly done, not used to improve existing programs and services and that there was no regular venue to discuss issues and concerns in program implementation.

Although information and technical assistance were provided some deemed that the follow through as inconsistent, weak and did not ensure that the interventions cascaded down to the frontliners. This again can be related to the system of monitoring and evaluation of programs and services.

Partnerships

In some FGDs, participants pointed out that there was no clear system for maintaining established links and networking. Unclear partnership expectations between and among NGOs-local SWDs and DSWD also added to tensions and confusions.

One suggested that DSWD should encourage more partnerships between their local counterparts and NGOs by conducting regular fora, consultations, common training, and providing directories of partners. It was also discussed how assisting programs of the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) and Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) for NGOs and POs could strengthen the partnerships among them.

Program and Project Specific Issues

There were program specific concerns that surfaced such as the lack of adoptive and foster families. Lack of Senior Social Workers for court-related cases and problems in schedules (availability issues/staffing) were also mentioned. These two issues could be interpreted as resource limitations or a matter of systems and procedures.

Resource Limitations

Resource limitations in the following areas were identified: livelihood program, relief goods and assistance, construction and improvement of facilities (particularly for male children, senior citizens, mentally ill vagrants), educational assistance, honoraria for DCWs, and lack of personnel

It has to be noted that the financial capacity of the LGU was recognized as a factor in the non-provision or lack in the above areas. What complicates matters was that resources were expected/promised and these were not delivered. This can be related to coordination and communications.

Social Worker

There were also concerns raised about the quality of service of some field personnel which they referred to as attitudinal issues (complacent, arrogant, unapproachable).

Issues about the welfare of the social workers surfaced revolving around security of tenure. There was also mention of the weak advocacy for the enactment of the Magna Carta for

Social Workers.

Standards

In some of the FGDs, the concern about maintaining standards was raised. The participants worry about unregulated centers, pre schools and that there were no clear or set standards for organized groups. It was also pointed out that the accreditation was far in between; e.g. marriage counselors and stress debriefers. Mentioned in a good number of FGDs was the matter of political appointees. There were designations of non-registered SWs in LGUs and the participants would like to know DSWD's policy on this matter.

Systems and Procedures

There were a number of issues that surfaced that could be clustered as under problems in systems and procedures. One was the delays experienced in the processing or delivery of the services. These included instances of delays in issuance of permits, licenses, accreditation; problems in accreditation procedures caused by confusion in the role of each unit (Provincial Social Welfare Office or PSWO, CSWDO, MSWDO; requirements for each stage or procedure); tedious process and numerous requirements (Emergency Shelter Assistance or ESA, Core Shelter Assistance Program or CSAP, adoption licensing, licensing and accreditation of NGOs). Non-provision of feedback on proposals and their status was also regarded as an issue.

In the area of funds flows and releases the following problems were encountered: delays in release and non-release of Gender and Development (GAD) allocations by LGUs.

Issues regarding fee structure and donations included unaffordable fees and seemingly unreasonable charging for donations.

Lack of Information was again mentioned. Many were unaware of processes and procedures to access programs and services (NGOs wanting to involve in KALAHI-CIDSS)

There were also questions that were raised pertaining to the handling of particular cases. These questions were:

- What do we do with cases that could not be accommodated due to space limitations?
- What do we do with cases that could not comply with basic requirements such as birth certificates or abandonment papers?
- What are the controls in centers to ensure that wards will not have access to banned substances such as drugs and alcohol.
- How do we handle perennial clients, those who would go forum-shopping and still end up being referred to DSWD?

Training and Capacity Building

Several of the comments on training and capability building were suggestions on the content and methodology. In terms of content, they FGD participants proposed that need training on: case management, house parenting, center management, when/how to institutionalize a child, family assessment, counseling child in difficult circumstances. It was also proposed that training should include immersions and that manuals be provided.

Issues that surfaced included comments about that resource persons provided were not knowledgeable and problems in scheduling and continuity such as unclear schedules, dependence on availability of resource persons and that the training program had no continuity. Also, training needs assessment was needed for their NGO partners.

Comments were also made on the scope of the training program, that training sessions were provided in targeted areas only (those included in program). Those not in the program targets requested that they be given access to the same services and programs. Funds limitation hamper conduct of trainings sessions and limit number of participants

This Evaluation Process

One participant questioned why they were the only ones included in the evaluation process.

2. Clients

Issues and Problems

- Adequacy Issues (livelihood, financial, medical, educational)
- Advocacy (implementation of law and/ or provisions)
- Lack of coordination with other agencies (PNP, courts)
- Facilities, Equipment, Materials
- Poor follow-through and Follow-up
- Lack of Information Dissemination
- Quality of Service of Social Workers
- Resource Limitations
- Beneficiary Selection and Targeting
- Systems and Procedures
- Training: Appropriateness
- "Unrealistic" Expectations

III. RESULTS OF THE FGD TO IMPROVE DSWD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

1. PARTNERS

Access

It was proposed that there should be equal access and opportunities to the different DSWD programs and services.

Advocacy

The participants proposed that DSWD spearheads the advocacy on the following issues:

- With the Commission on Audit - introduction of more sensible regulations
- With Congress - more funds allocation; the creation of centers on the district level for mentally ill-vagrants and PWDs; amendment of RA 7160; approval of the Magna Carta for the Social Workers and Social Development Workers
- With Local Chief Executives - support for DSWD programs and services; release of

GAD funds; security of tenure of social workers.

Some participants also recognized that the local SWs have their own advocacy function and that the advocacy should not be left entirely to the DSWD.

CIDSS (KALAHI and ECCD)

Participants that the CIDSS program be extended and that they cover more sites. Also, that the matter of fund release be looked into in order to remove the bottlenecks.

Coordination and Communication

Concrete suggestions on how to improve coordination and communication were surfaced in the different FGDs. These suggestions were:

- Clarify the protocols in communication and coordination:
- Identify who are the information users
- Consider the decision-making and communication hierarchy (MSWDO, CSWDO, PSWDO, Regional Social Welfare and Development Office or RSWDO)
- Execute MOA at all levels (MSWDO, CSWDO, PSWDO, RSWDO)
- FO/CO should see to it that they inform their clients//partners as to the development of their respective concerns.
- Communication should be sent a week or more ahead of scheduled activity
- Specify in communication the intended recipient
- Connect with the LGUs and NGOs thru internet or electronic mail
- Involve the LGUs in planning and targeting clients to be served to ensure synchronization instead of overlapping
- All requests, applications and referrals should be given feedback and have a feedback mechanism in place

It was also proposed that the quarterly consultation be revived since the last consultation in one particular region was held in 2002. A participant also said that training sessions could also be used as venues for coordination.

Devolution Issues

In some regions, the issue of devolution was raised. The participants suggested that the direct services and programs should already be devolved and that the funds should also go the same way.

Facilities and Equipment

There was a recommendation to look into DSWD facilities and equipment. Come up with a clear plan for improvements and additions. Those changes requiring minimal expense can already be implemented (address conduciveness and keeping confidentiality issues). Consider also additional facilities for new programs for clients mentioned and what resources can be raised from where (LGU, international, internal funds, local fund raising, etc.)

Fees and Charges

On fees and charges, the participants proposed a review of fee structure and charges and make the necessary changes and policies.

Information Dissemination, Provision and Systems

Recommendations on improving the provision and dissemination of information were:

- Conduct orientation regularly on new programs and services; local SW to echo orientation to stakeholders and partners in their areas; highlight roles of each stakeholder
- Provide IEC materials and update regularly; these should include MC issuances, brochures on the different programs and services, newly enacted laws and policies and IRRs. (e.g. Expanded Senior Citizen Law, Solo Parent Act, Anti-Domestic Violence)
- Explore other media for information dissemination (e.g., TV shows)
- Provide local SWOs information about NGOs. Likewise when local SWs prepare reports include information about NGOs and also provide information to them

Licensing, Accreditation and Permits

On the service of licensing, accreditation and issuance of permits, the following suggestions were made:

- Review accreditation policies and procedures
- Come up with clear protocols and procedures
- Look into the possibility of deputizing regional/field offices (e.g., issuance of travel permits)
- Conduct regular and frequent accreditation
- Provide immediate feedback to applicant

Monitoring and Evaluation

Improvements in the monitoring and evaluation systems were proposed. These were:

- Do the monitoring and evaluation of programs and services regularly
- Use the information obtained from M&E to improve existing programs and develop new ones
- There should be clear consequences for non-compliance and neglect and that sanctions are actually applied.
- Flow of data and information to, from and about all partners (LGUs, NGOs and other intermediaries/service providers) be clear and well-communicated.
- Innovate and adopt new technologies

Partnership-Building

Recommendations made on partnership-building were:

ON ABSNET:

- Reconvene ABSNET
- Make ABSNET monitoring part of RO/FO functions
- Ensure regularity of its meeting (monthly or quarterly)
- Clarify who should head it
- Clarify expectations from/roles of the different partners (DSWD-CO, DSWD-FO, local SWOs, NGOs, POs, etc.)
- National and Regional DSWD Offices to emphasize the concept and idea of partnership between LGUs and NGOs.
- There should be a coordination in the preparation of case studies between LGUs, NGOs and DSWD
- Forge Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between or among partners to strengthen partnerships
- Furnish a directory of "experts and resource persons"

Program and Project Specific

The participants also came up with suggestions on the scope of programs and the development of new ones.

- Explore possibility of expanding scope of key programs
- Develop programs for indigenous peoples (for existing programs like the Badjaos, evaluate and work the difficulties encountered)
- Include non-registered OFW families in crisis in DSWD programs/services.
- Develop a program for the mentally ill if it was already determined that they are DSWD's responsibility
- Prioritize needs-based programs and projects
- Come up with clear position re handling of psychotic vagrants (DOH or DSWD or LGU?)

The matter about the presence of banned substance in one of the centers was again raised. It was proposed that the center in question look into this allegation.

For the adoption program, participant recommended that the adoptive parents be given ample time and all the necessary information

Resource Augmentation

Participants also recommended that the resources of their organizations be augmented by way of increased subsidy, provision of resources to be able to conduct training sessions and relief work including shelter for fire victims. It was also pointed out that for funds already existing, DSWD should facilitate their timely releases.

Scheduling

One participant raised the possibility of allowing for flexible office hours in order to accommodate the demands of their clients.

Standards

The following were the suggestions to ensure that standards were being maintained:

- Come up with clear guidelines on staffing patterns of SWs for LGUs and standards rates
- Require that head SW/MSWDO/CSWDO/PSWDO are registered Social Workers
- Issue a memorandum circular on standard rates/professional fees for accredited counselors, social workers and similar professionals

Systems and Procedures

There were also recommendations pertaining to program systems and procedures. Some of these were also repeated in previous sections.

- Fast track and lessen the requirements for CSAP and ESA
- There should be proper channeling in the delivery of food supplies DSWD-PSWDO-MSWDO or standardize the relief goods operations
- Review procedures of the referral system to remove favoritism on the issuance of referral and install systems so as to track receipt of goods and their releases
- Come up with updated directories of contact persons
- Ensure that there is clarity in expectations and roles with involved units, agencies and organizations
- Look into the funds transfer and flow and formulate a faster mechanism for transfer

Training and Capability-Building

There were several recommendations concerning the programs on training and capability building. These were clustered according to content and methodology.

Under content, the recommendations were:

- Center administration
- Institutionalizing a child
- Orientation on SW programs and services
- Program/project conception to Proposal writing
- Preparation of legal documents
- Refresher course on counseling
- Trainor's training
- Training of supervisors (CSWDO/MSWDO) on non-ECD areas
- Processing of abandonment papers
- Handling confidential and court-related cases
- Case management
- House parenting
- Information dissemination and campaigns
- Advocacy of newly enacted laws

Suggestions on improving methodology were:

- Develop relevant training to different sectors (i.e. Pre-retirement training, seminar for Older Persons or OPs)
- Conduct post training M&E
- Have consultations on value formation/value formation activities.
- Conduct more comprehensive training with immersion. This is needed to improve skills of youth service provider (Unlad Kabataan Program or UKP).
- Manuals needs to be updated (UKP)
- Conduct regular visit and technical assistance to NGOs particularly on case management
- Add to the roster of resource persons

There were also participants who emphasized the need for regularity of the conduct of the trainings sessions and some said that it would be good if it can be held more frequently. The conduct of training needs assessment of both NGO and LGU partners was also highlighted so that DSWD can determine the interventions fit for their partners and appropriate to the situation of the cities/municipalities.

2. CLIENTS

- Advocacy
- Expansion
- Facilities
- Introduce Innovations/New Strategies
- Information Dissemination
- Partnership
- Standards: Accreditation, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Systems and Procedures
- Sustainability, Resource Generation and Mobilization
- Training

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONSULTANT BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE FGD FOR PARTNERS AND CLIENTS

1. Systems, Coordination and Information

The FGD participants regarded the area of coordination and communication as an area that needed improvement. Many of the issues and problems that surfaced in the workshop discussions were symptoms of this fundamental weakness. The recommendation section presented vital points that DSWD could aim to implement.

Among the key organization systems is monitoring and evaluation. The importance of monitoring and evaluation in the success of any program or project cannot be over emphasized. A good M&E system could spell the difference in the quality of programs and services provided. The simplicity and regularity have to be among the criteria when designing or improving their system. And most important is that the information obtained from M&E are actually used to improve DSWD's performance

Standards, systems and procedures need to be reviewed and revitalized. It could be that the systems are defined but not actually installed because of ignorance or confusion. More and more, the systems and procedures in place should take into the consideration the devolved nature of DSWD's programs and services. From the comments of the participants, there is still a lot of room for improving the systems.

Provision and dissemination of information is another weak area. This range from distribution of flyers or brochures about their programs and services to making use of other media for reaching DSWD clients and partners. More important though is ensuring that key policies, rules and regulations are well-explained to the partners who are front liners in the delivery of the services. The system for cascading vital information has to be well studied and consistently implemented across the different localities.

The perceived unequal access to programs and services and the role of politics in this access has to be highlighted. DSWD has to examine whether the perception is valid or simply caused by the weakness in systems, procedures and communication.

2. Training, Capability Building and Technical Assistance

Another major area needing improvement is in training, capability building and technical assistance. Concrete suggestions were cited in terms of the content and methodology. What has to be highlighted of the three, capability building is the more fundamental concept and that training and technical assistance are just some of the approaches to capacity building. A more holistic and integrated approach to capability building has to be defined. The participants themselves pointed out that the follow through and the implementation or operationalization of what they have learned are hampered a number of factors. These hindering factors have to be identified and a set of interventions for each formulated.

3. Resource Generation and Mobilization

Resource augmentation is another dimension needing DSWD's attention. Although resource limitation is a perennial problem for government, other strategies had to be explored to generate and mobilize resources. Resource generation and mobilization entail looking at both internal and external resources. As mentioned by the participants, the LGUs had been sources of funds but only if the LCEs were supportive of the programs. Thus, getting the LCE's support should be a principal priority for DSWD.

The communities are also pools of resources, if only the right strategies are introduced. External fund sources like the NGOs, churches and business sector are also potential resource providers. Again, the creativity in tapping into these resource pools is important. If DSWD itself have limitations in formulating its own strategies to raise resources, then it is understandable that this is regarded as a major weakness. Maybe a marketplace or forum on various ways of resource mobilization can be made a project of ABSNET. ABSNET's function could also be made broader to include other resource augmentation and TA concerns and not just standards maintenance. The SWs from both government (DSWD, LGUs) and NGOs can have exchanges of their success stories or innovative approaches.

Corollary to the issue of limited resources is the lack of facilities and equipment. The participants have forwarded very reasonable recommendations in this area. Certain standards in the different facilities of DSWD and local SW centers have to be maintained.

Also, a clear strategy for improving facilities and equipment could be presented formulated taking in to consideration the actual needs of the regions and the clients and for housing new programs and projects. This strategy need not be an exclusive DSWD responsibility, It can be a project of the district, province, city, municipality with other sectoral partners.

4. Partnership Building

This is a key activity of DSWD that also need some examination. The local SW networks or ABSNET is recognized as a facilitative mechanism for partnership building yet it seemed from the comments that this is not maximized. It would be good if the role of partnership building or networking be included in the performance rating of the field offices of DSWD (with the success of ABSNET as one of the indicators). The issues of coordination, resources and capacity-building could actually be partially addressed if partnerships among all SW workers and advocates are vibrant and broadly established.

The assessment also affirmed the positive work done by DSWD in its various programs and services. It was also clear that the role of being the enabler of its partners was not fully played. The role of an enabler or steerer needed to be looked at from a more pro-active stance of an advocate. The term advocacy was mentioned only once but a number of other comments pointed out the importance of advocacy in the areas of advancing the welfare of social workers, policy reforms and implementation of policy gains.

5. Advocacy

Advocacy underpins many of the priority issues and entails a posturing that aims to win more believers and partners into one's cause. These can be by way of ensuring standards are being met, enabling partners to be better providers of services and programs, and institutionalizing within each LGU the support for social welfare and development. Advocacy also means that the many lessons and gains learned in pilot projects and program targeted areas are also introduced or mainstreamed to other non-program areas.

Being an advocate does not mean providing all the resources. Working together on programs and projects, on addressing issues and solving problems are in themselves an approach to capability and partnership building. The real challenge is looking at old ways of doing things with a new pair of eyes. Most importantly, it is doing your mission with enough passion and excitement to believe that solutions can be found.