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Department of Social Welfare and Development

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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

NO. 11

SERIES OF 2009

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMULATION OF DSWD'S 5-YEAR RESEARCH AGENDA

I. Background

The issuance of Executive Orders 15 series of 1998 (Redirecting The Functions And Operations Of The Department Of Social Welfare And Development) and 221 series of 2003 (Amending Executive Order No. 15 Series Of 1998) underlined the DSWD's role as the lead public sector agency in SWD performing two (2) key functions that of steering and rowing. The Department's key change agenda was a more effective and balanced shift of its role from that of an implementing to a "steering" agency. To carry out its new functions, the Department recognizes the need to have a well-grounded information and knowledge on the social welfare and development sector. It further acknowledges *research* as a major tool in crafting appropriate and relevant pro-poor programs and policies.

In 2002, DSWD issued Department Order No. 15 entitled "Social Welfare and Development Research Program Framework". This attempted to institutionalize a comprehensive and integrated research program by identifying program scope, methods, components and institutional arrangement. It served as a comprehensive five-year (2003-2007) research program which proposed to conduct studies along four major themes: (a) poverty reduction; (b) social protection; (c) institutional development and strengthening for effective governance; and (d) support for social welfare and development efforts.

The 2004-2010 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) banners the twin-pronged strategies of economic development and social equity to achieve a meaningful, broad-based inclusive growth.

As some of the researches in the Medium Term Research Agenda 2003-2007 were undertaken, the Department deemed it necessary to review the accomplishments in the institutionalization of its research program. It should also be able to come up also with the 5-year Research Agenda which would be the blueprint in ensuring that the research activities of the Department are consistent and responsive to the emerging concerns of the SWD sector.

II. Objective:

The general objective is for DSWD to formulate a 5-year Research Agenda that is comprehensive, holistic and responsive to the needs of the social welfare and development sector. Research shall also direct DSWD's efforts in pursuing and supporting the Department's reform agenda.

Specifically, it aims to:

1. Identify major key players in research agenda setting and their tasks, and
2. Provide step by step activities that will lead to the formulation of the 5-Year Research Agenda.

III. Definition of Terms

Social Protection - constitutes policies and programs that seek to reduce poverty and vulnerability to risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized by promoting and protecting livelihood and employment, protecting against hazards and sudden loss of income, and improving people's capacity to manage risks. Social welfare, social insurance, social safety nets and labor market are the four components of social protection. (NEDA SDC Resolution 1 series of 2007)

Reform Agenda – or the National Sector Support for Social Welfare and Development Reform Project is the comprehensive medium term agenda of the DSWD in addressing the issues of welfare, poverty and sustainable social development. The agenda focuses on the disadvantaged sectors of society and takes into account the new role of the Department of Social Welfare and Development as leader, policy-maker and enabler of the sector. (NSSWDRP Links of Outputs, 2007)

PDPB Policy and Research Division – is the office/unit responsible for coordinating and overseeing the research activities of the Department in coordination with other bureaus, offices, NGOs, NGAs and stakeholders.

Research and Development Technical Working Group (RD-TWG) – a group of technical persons from different offices/units of the DSWD Central Office responsible for initiating and conducting regular planning and review of workshops as basis for redirection and enrichment of various policies and program components.

Focal Persons for Research – individuals identified as mainly responsible for the research concerns and activities of the Field Offices

Major stakeholders - group, organization, or system that affect or can be affected by the Department's actions

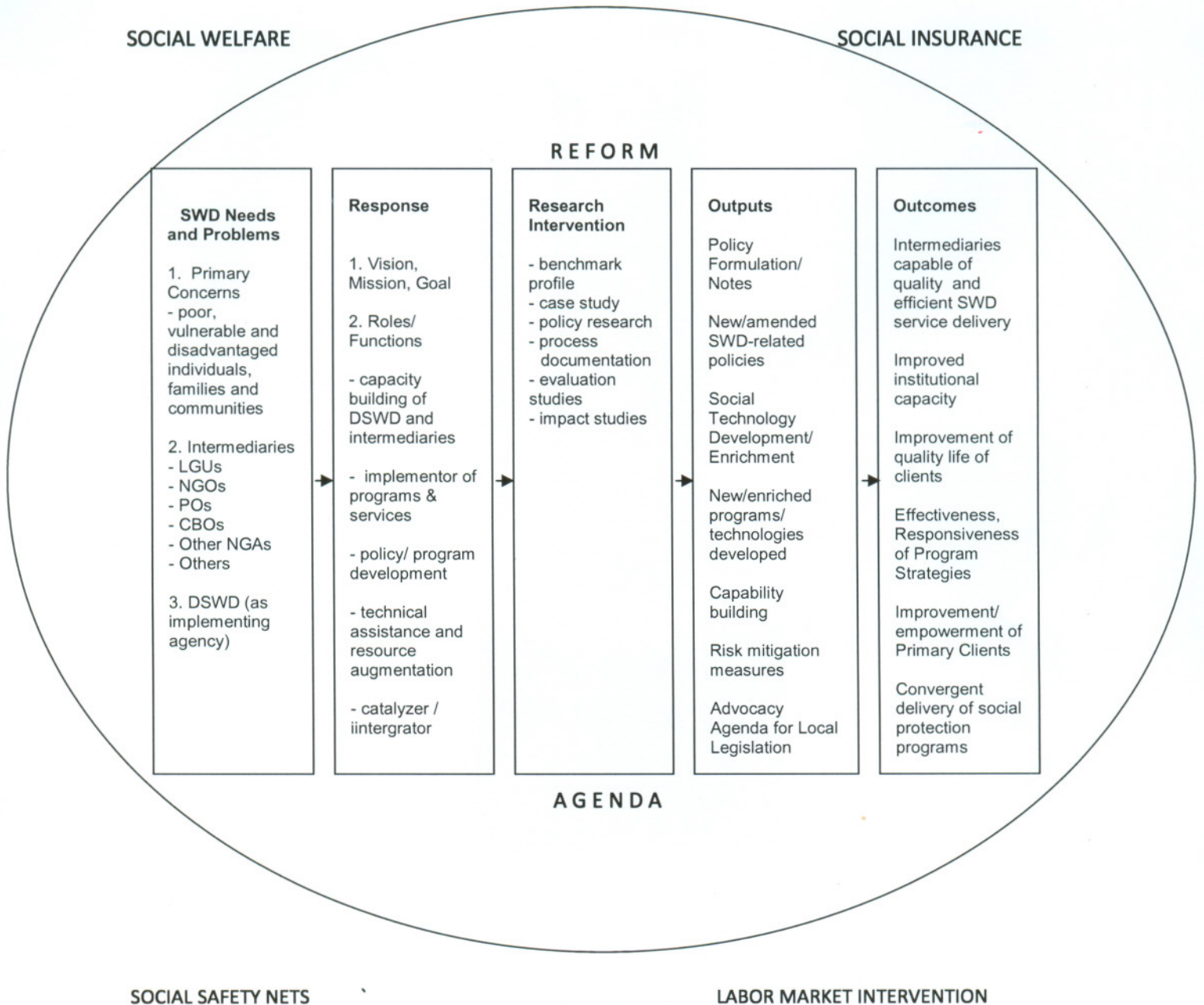
Situationer – presentation and analysis of the existing conditions in a particular area. It is an important tool in planning and identifying the target communities and clientele for appropriate programs/services intervention. (AO 2 series of 2005)

IV. Research Framework

The framework guides the formulation of the DSWD's 5-Year Research Agenda in the context of Social Protection. The general goal of the SWD sector is to provide social protection particularly to the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged through intervention on social welfare, social insurance, social safety nets and labor market. Social protection is defined to assist vulnerable sectors of society especially the poor in managing various risks and hazard.

It is recognized that *research* is a major tool in crafting appropriate and relevant pro-poor programs and policies. The first step in research agenda formulation is to do an analysis of the internal (DSWD as an organization including its partners and intermediaries) and external environment of the sector. After the analysis, the next step is to identify the gaps, needs and the response, and the specific research interventions to achieve the desired response.

The framework shows that the research will be carried out in the context of the DSWD's Reform Agenda.



V. Methodology

In formulating the 5-year research agenda, the Department will involve PDPB-Research Unit, Field Offices' focal persons for research, Research and Development-Technical Working Group (RD-TWG) members, advisory panel and major public and private stakeholders.

The following activities shall be undertaken for the formulation of the 5-Year Research Agenda:

1. Consolidation of Reference Materials

The initial activity is to come up with pertinent materials that will serve as reference in the agenda formulation. These would include the following:

- MTPDP/MTRDP (2004-2010)
- agency thrusts and priorities
- research studies conducted
- situationers/reports of the reform project's Social Welfare and Development Report specialist
- Annual Regional Development Report (RDR)
- Other materials relevant to the research agenda formulation

The PDPB-Research Unit is in-charge of consolidating and summarizing the information/materials obtained.

2. Identification of Priority Research Areas

The Research and Development Technical Working Group (RD-TWG) members will convene to identify the priority research areas. Specifically, the tasks include:

- Review of the reference materials provided by the PDPB Research Unit;
- Review of the Department's previous and current activities along Research and Development as well as the allocation of resources;
- Review of related program and policy recommendations;
- Identification of trends, gaps, problems and emerging concerns;
- Identification of priority research areas

The PDPB-Research Unit shall identify and invite an expert advisory panel to review and provide comments/recommendations to the initial priority research areas identified by the RD-TWG.

3. Conduct of Consultative Workshops

The priority research areas identified by the RD-TWG members and reviewed by the expert advisory panel shall be presented in consultative workshops. These consultative workshops will be consecutively conducted in 3 clusters (Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao) with participants coming from Field Offices (focal for research) and major public and private stakeholders (pre-selected NGAs, NGOs, POs, LGUs and members of the academe). Essentially, this exercise intends to generate inputs of FOs and major

stakeholders in setting priority research areas based on the local situation/experiences and development needs.

Specifically, the consultative workshop will be the venue to:

- Present the priority research areas as identified by the RD-TWG members;
- Validate the findings and assessment of suggested priority research areas; and
- Gather relevant inputs and comments

The PDPB-Research Unit shall be in-charge of the preparation of these consultative workshops, while the RD-TWG members will serve as presentors. FOs focal persons for research will assist in the pre-identification of major stakeholders.

4. Processing of Workshop Outputs

The PDPB-Research Unit shall be responsible for the processing and consolidation of workshop outputs. The RD-TWG will then be convened to review and provide inputs/comments on the consolidated workshop outputs. Furthermore, the PDPB-Research Unit will facilitate the conduct of the meetings and assign the necessary documentor and facilitator and other personnel necessary for the activity.

5. Validation and Prioritization of Research Areas

The final step will be another consultative workshop which will involve members of the ExeCom and ManCom, Regional Directors and focal persons from research.

This process involves the validation, prioritization and finalization of research areas. Prioritization will be guided by the following criteria:

- emerging concerns and trends;
- feasibility/doability of the research based on existing capabilities and resources (i.e., manpower, logistics, financial);
- relevance of the R&D

The RD-TWG members shall process the workshop outputs in a separate meeting to be facilitated by the PDPB-Research Unit.

6. Publication of the 5-Year Research Agenda

The Research Agenda will undergo final review and approval of the ExeCom and ManCom members and the Regional Directors prior to its release and publication. The PDPB Policy and Research Division will handle the publication and dissemination of the 5-Year Research Agenda. Partnership with the academe/state universities and colleges (SUCs) may be forged to intensify the dissemination of the research agenda and utilization of research findings.

VI. Institutional Arrangement

The following shall carry the necessary activities for the 5-year Research Agenda formulation:

Policy Development and Planning Bureau- Research Unit:

- a. Prepare the information/reference materials to be reviewed by the RD-TWG members;
- b. Facilitate the conduct of meetings with RD-TWG members, sessions with the expert panel and the consultative workshops;
- c. Request for the final review and approval of the Research Agenda by the members of the Execom, MANCOM and RD-TWG;
- d. Process and consolidate the outputs from the two consultative workshops;
- e. Arrange for the publication and dissemination of the 5-year Research Agenda.

RD-TWG members:

- a. Review and assess the information/reference materials;
- b. Identify the priority research areas;
- c. Prepare the presentation of priority research areas for the two rounds of consultative workshops;
- d. Review and provide inputs/comments on the consolidated workshop outputs.

Field Offices' Focal Persons for Research

- a. Assist the PDPB-Research Unit in the identification of major public and private stakeholders;
- b. Participate actively in the two rounds of consultative workshops.

ExeCom and ManCom members, Regional Directors

- a. Participate in the second round of consultative workshop;
- b. Review and approve the 5-year Research Agenda.

VII. Time Frame (2009)

Activity	June				July				August				Sept				Oct				Nov			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Consolidation of Reference Materials	■	■																						
2. Identification of Initial Research Areas - review of reference materials - identification of trends, gaps & emerging concerns; - review and comments of expert advisory apnel			■	■	■	■	■	■																
3. Conduct of Consultative Workshops - preparation - actual conduct									■	■	■	■												
4. Processing of Workshop outputs													■	■										
5. Validation & Prioritization of Research Areas - preparation - actual conduct															■	■	■	■						
6. Publication of 5-Year Research Agenda - review and approval of ExeCom, ManCom & Rds - publication and dissemination - partnership with academes/SUCs																			■	■	■	■	■	■

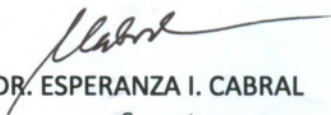
VIII. Repealing Clause

All guidelines inconsistent with the provisions of this MC are hereby repealed modified or amended accordingly.

IX. Effectivity

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.

Issued this 8th day of June 2009 in Quezon City.


DR. ESPERANZA I. CABRAL
Secretary
