

Memorandum Circular No. 04
Series of 2018

SUBJECT: Guidelines in the Organization, Mobilization and Strengthening of Area-Based Standards Network (ABSNET)

I. RATIONALE

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) serves as the Philippine government's regulatory arm for NGOs engaged in the delivery of social welfare and development programs and services, pursuant to RA 4373 of 1965, RA 5416 of 1968 and RA 10847 of 2016. This mandate resulted to a growing number registered, licensed and accredited Social Welfare and Development Agencies (SWDAs) by the Department. In 2002, the Department has developed guidelines that promotes the organization and mobilization of Area-Based Standards Network (ABSNET).

ABSNET is seen as an effective strategy with the end goal of institutionalizing collaboration with the SWDAs that are registered, licensed and accredited by the DSWD, which constitute the intermediaries for social welfare service delivery. It aimed to provide participative and consultative mechanisms in the areas of standards development; registration, licensing and accreditation; capability building; and technical assistance. ABSNET has become the avenue as well as in the promotion of the standard guidelines on the Department to all SWDAs, private and local government alike. ABSNET assists the DSWD in advocating the registration, licensing and accreditation of SWDAs through their involvement in the initial assessment and peer consultation.

From 2002 up to the present, a total of three (3) guidelines covering ABSNET have been issued by the Department. ABSNET as an organization, which started as a cluster in their respective provinces, has grown fast that these clusters have to be organized at the regional level and eventually at the national level. From 2002 to 2008, the number of clusters has grown to fifty (50) and at present, there is a total of sixty seven (67) clusters. The implementation of ABSNET as a strategy is guided with three (3) existing guidelines. However, the gap between what is written and what is practiced has widened. There are some provisions in the guidelines that are not clear specifically some of the stated roles and function of ABSNET. Moreover, protocols on election of officers from the cluster to regional up to the national level need to be clarified.

This guideline is therefore promulgated not only to facilitate the formal organization, mobilization and strengthening of the cluster and its regional and national counterparts but to address issues on matters related to roles and functions of ABSNET membership and holding of positions in the whole ABSNET structure.

II. LEGAL BASES:

This guideline is hereby promulgated based on the following legal bases:

1. 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

a. **Article II, Section 23.** The State shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation.

b. **Article XIII, Sections 15 and 16. Roles and Rights of People's Organization**

SEC.15. The State shall respect the role of independent people's organizations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means.

People's organizations are *bona fide* associations of citizens with demonstrated capacity to promote the public interest and with identifiable leadership, membership, and structure.

SEC. 16. The right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms.

2. Republic Act No. 10847 of 2016. Sections 4. Sections 23 and 26 of the Same Act are hereby likewise amended as follows:

SEC. 23. Registration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development. - No social welfare and development agency, as defined herein, shall operate and be accredited as such unless it shall first have registered and secured a license with the Department of Social Welfare and Development which shall then issue the corresponding registration certificate and license to operate: *Provided*, That existing social welfare and development agencies at the time of approval of this Act shall have a period of one (1) year within which to secure the corresponding certificate of registration and license to operate.

Before any social welfare and development agency shall be duly registered and licensed, the following requirements must be duly complied with to the satisfaction of the Department of Social Welfare and Development:

- (1) That the applicant must be engaged mainly or generally in social welfare and development activities;
- (2) That the applicant has employed a sufficient number of duly qualified staff and/or registered social workers to supervise and take charge of its social welfare and development activities in accordance with the set standards;
- (3) That the applicant must show in a duly certified financial statement that at least seventy percent (70%) of its funds are disbursed for direct social work services; and
- (4) That the applicant keeps a record of all social development and/or welfare activities handled by it.”

SEC. 29. Penal Provisions. - The following shall be penalized with a fine of not less than one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00), or imprisonment for not less than six (6) months but not more than two (2) years, or both, at the discretion of the court:

Any person, corporation or entity operating as a social welfare and development agency, without the corresponding valid Certificate of Registration and License to Operate issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall be penalized with a fine of not less than one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) and/or imprisonment for not less than one (1) year but not more than three (3) years, at the discretion of the court. These penalties shall be without prejudice to the seizure of equipment, instruments and other facilities of the social welfare and development agency.”

3. **Administrative Order Number 16 s 2012** -also known as “Revised Administrative Order No. 17 Series of 2008 (Rules and Regulations on the Registration and Licensing of Social Welfare and Development Agencies and Accreditation of Social Welfare and Development Programs and Services) which was issued to establish mechanism and procedures on the registration, licensing and accreditation of agencies engaged in social welfare and development activities.

III. OBJECTIVES:

1. **General:** To institutionalize the Area Based Standards Network (ABSNET) structure that would strengthen cooperation and

coordination among Social Welfare and Development Agencies (SWDAs). This is aimed to ensure quality implementation of Social Welfare and Development (SWD) programs and services for the disadvantaged and marginalized sectors of the society.

2. Specific:

- a. To promote meaningful participation of the intermediaries as partners of DSWD along standards development, promotions and compliance.
- b. To continuously organize local or cluster networks and build their capabilities along standards development, registration, licensing and accreditation assessment;
- c. To mobilize the networks for actual registration, licensing and accreditation assessment;
- d. To provide a vehicle for mutual help and learning among intermediaries for coordination and partnership building;
- e. To strengthen Regional and National Area Based Network to assist the Department in the implementation of its regulatory functions; and,
- f. To define the membership, qualifications and structure of ABSNET from the cluster level to its counterpart in the regional and national level.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

1. **ABSNET**-Area Based Standards Network is an organization of DSWD registered/licensed/accredited social welfare and development agencies (SWDAs) that assists the DSWD in implementation and monitoring of social welfare and development programs and services, provision of technical assistance and conduct of advocacy activities on regulatory services of the Department.
2. **Cluster ABSNET** - refers to the organization of ABSNET cluster within the geographical jurisdiction of the province/city/municipality.
3. **Regional ABSNET** - refers to the organization of Cluster ABSNET within the geographical jurisdiction of the DSWD Field Office.
4. **National ABSNET** - refers to the organization of Regional ABSNET into a national ABSNET.
5. **Network** - a group of people or organizations that shares common interests and common goal.

6. **Provisional Members** - refers to Social Welfare and Development Agencies whose Registration/Licensing and Accreditation (R/L/A) is expired. Right to suffrage is also stopped pending the result of their application of renewal of R/L/A.
7. **Social Welfare and Development Agency (SWDA)** - refers to a public or private corporation or organization, engaged in providing directly or indirectly social welfare services and obtains its finances either totally or in part, from any agency or instrumentality of the government and/or from the community by direct or indirect solicitations and/or fund drives and other fund-generating activities as authorized by law and/or endowment.

V. GENERAL POLICIES:

These guidelines shall provide the required structure of ABSNET at the cluster, regional and national level.

A. Basic Formation

	CLUSTER	REGIONAL	NATIONAL
FORMATION AND ORGANIZATION	SWDAs may form Cluster ABNSET provided that they are located in the same geographical area that belongs to the same region and broken down to provinces or cities or municipalities that represent the six main sectors namely: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Child Welfare; b. Youth Welfare; c. Family and Community Welfare; d. Women’s Welfare; e. Persons With Disabilities Welfare; and f. Senior Citizens Welfare. 	All existing Cluster ABSNET, represented by their respective officers, in each region shall be organized into a Regional ABSNET.	Regional ABSNET Chairpersons shall form the National ABSNET Board.
	A new cluster can be formed in either province or city or municipality provided that there are at least six (6) SWDAs that would represent all		

	<p>six (6) sectors mentioned above. Until such a new cluster is established, SWDAs will be members in the nearest established cluster in the region.</p>		
	<p>Classification of membership for ABSNET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Private Social Welfare Agency b. Auxiliary Social Welfare and Development Agency c. Local Social Welfare and Development Office d. DSWD Centers and Institutions 		
<p>MEMBERSHIP</p>	<p>SWDAs which are Registered or Registered and Licensed or Registered, Licensed and Accredited or any or all of the three regulatory processes (R/L/A) shall automatically become members of Cluster ABSNET. Subsequently, application for renewal of Registration/Licensing/Accreditation will not be processed unless certificate of membership to ABSNET, signed by the Cluster Chair, is submitted.</p>		
	<p>For SWDAs whose R/L/A have already expired and/or have not renewed their R/L/A yet, will be considered as provisional members and as such will have no voting capacity and cannot be elected as officer.</p>		
	<p>Only ABSNET members that has an active membership status shall be allowed to renew their registration, license, and/or accreditation. An active membership status means that the member was able to post a 75% attendance in all set cluster meetings and set activities for the year that requires participation of general membership. The ABSNET Cluster Chairperson shall issue a Certificate of active membership based on the ABSNET Cluster's records of members' attendance/participation.</p>		
	<p>New Organizations with social welfare activities in the area will be notified by the Cluster Chairperson on how they can become a member of the Cluster. Clear clustering of jurisdiction or boundaries of geographical area must</p>		

	be established among the existing Cluster ABSNET in the region.		
	A new cluster can be formed in either at the province or city or municipality, provided, that there are at least six (6) sectors mentioned above. Until such a new cluster is established. The concerned SWDA are considered members of the nearest established cluster in the region.		
REPRESENTATION	Member SWDAs shall designate its Executive Director or Program Head as its permanent representative and his/her permanent alternate to the ABSNET as officially endorsed by its Board of Trustee. The permanent and his/her alternate is required to participate in the Cluster/Regional/National ABSNET activities. Only authorized SWDA representatives may participate in the elections and ABSNET activities. In the event that the Executive Director or Program Head representing the SWDA shall resign from the SWDA s/he is representing, s/he will be automatically be replaced by the new Executive Director/Program Head/OIC officially designated by the Board of Trustee.		
COMPOSITION & QUALIFICATION OF OFFICERS	One (1) Chairperson		
Chairperson	Elected by the General Assembly.	Elected among the Chairpersons of the Clusters.	Elected among the Chairpersons of the Regional ABSNET.
	Valid Registration, License and Accreditation		
Vice Chairperson	2 Vice Chairperson		Three (3) Vice Chairpersons
	Elected by the General Assembly	Elected among the Chairpersons of the Clusters.	Elected among the Chairpersons of the Regional ABSNET.
	SWDA being represented should have a valid Registration and License and Accreditation Certificate. If coming from LGU, its Center/should be accredited.		
	There are two (2) Vice-Chairpersons positions available at the Cluster and Regional ABSNET, in the event that the Chairperson of the Cluster is elected to any Regional or National ABSNET position, an election will be held that would decide who among the Vice		They will represent Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao island groups respectively

	Chairpersons would be the new Chair. Meanwhile, the role and responsibilities of the two (2) Vice Chairs shall be decided amongst the officers of the Cluster ABSNET and Regional ABSNET.	
Secretary	One (1) Secretary	
	Elected by the General Assembly	Elected among the officers
	SWDA being represented can either have updated Registration only (Auxiliary SWDA) or updated Registration and License or updated Registration, License and Accreditation.	
Committee Heads	Committee Heads for Policy Review Committee, Capability Building Committee, and Membership and Communication.	
	Elected by the General Assembly	Elected among the officers
	SWDA being represented can either have updated Registration only (Auxiliary SWDA) or updated Registration and License or updated Registration, License and Accreditation.	
Focal Persons / Representatives	One (1) LSWDO Focal Person - LSWDOs, electing among themselves, shall select their point person to the Cluster ABSNET.	
		DSWD Center and Residential Care Facilities Representative
		All other Cluster ABSNET Representatives who were not elected for any of the above positions shall automatically become Board Members and would become a member of the committee of their choice.
Executive Committee	The Officers listed above shall form the Executive Committee (ExeCom) of the Cluster and Regional ABSNET. The ExeCom shall lead in the planning, implementation, monitoring of programs and activities that will lead in the attainment of the goals of the organization.	

TERM	The ABSNET officers shall hold their position for a three-year (3) term in not more than two consecutive terms.		
	Election shall be held every September of the third (3 rd) year.	Election shall be held every October of the third (3 rd) year.	
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	All members of the Cluster ABSNET shall form the General Assembly.	Composed of all SWDAs who are members of their respective Cluster ABSNET in their particular region. Regional general assembly can be organized once a year depending on the availability of funds.	Composed of all SWDAs who are members of their respective Cluster ABSNET nationwide. National general assembly can be organized once every two years depending on the availability of funds.
	Remaining members who were not able to get a post shall select the committee, which they shall be a member.		
VOTING MEMBERS	Only SWDA with valid Registration only (Auxiliary SWDA) or updated Registration and License or updated Registration, License and Accreditation can vote. Provisional members do not have the right to vote in the cluster elections		
RESIGNATION of the MEMBERS of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	In the event that the Chairperson will resign, s/he will be replaced by one of the 2 Vice Chairs thru election. If one Vice Chair will resign, s/he will be replaced thru election and the same goes for the Secretary. All resignation letter will be submitted to the Cluster Chair/Regional Chair which shall be forwarded to Standards Unit.		In the event that the Chairperson will resign, s/he will be replaced by one of the 3 Vice Chairs thru election. If one Vice Chair will resign, s/he will be replaced thru election and the same goes for the Secretary. All resignation letter will be submitted to the National ABSNET Chair and

		forwarded to Standards Bureau.
IDENTIFICATION of OFFICIAL STATION of ABSNET	<p>The Cluster ABSNET shall identify an official station, a venue for holding consultation meetings and review of licensing and accreditation application/s among others. Accessibility and visibility to both the ABSNET members and the SWDA applicants shall be the primary consideration in the selection. The expected output is that the official station to be utilized by the ABSNET shall have the consent of either the LGU department Head, or SWDA Executive Director whichever is applicable.</p>	

B. Election Process

1. In the cluster and regional level, the DSWD Field Office Director shall appoint a Committee on Election which shall be composed of one (1) Chairperson and two (2) members, preferably from DSWD Centers and Residential Care Facilities or Field Office. The following would be the tasks of the committee:
 - a. To facilitate and manage the conduct of nomination and election.
 - b. To determine the quorum of the members which should always be 50% plus one (50%+1).
 - c. DSWD Center and Residential Care Facilities Representatives serve as the oversight and shall have the role as the tie breaker.
 - d. To ensure that all sectors are represented.
 - e. In the regional level, the clusters must ensure that their sets of officers are present during the scheduled elections as only present officers will be allowed to be nominated.

2. In the national level, Standards Bureau shall be the one to appoint Committee on Election.

3. The elections shall be done by secret balloting.
4. Proxies (for casting of votes) will be allowed provided that request has been submitted and approved by the Regional/Bureau Director at least 3 working days prior to the scheduled election.

C. Secretariat

1. In the cluster and regional level, the Standards Unit shall act as the Secretariat of the Cluster ABSNET and Regional ABSNET.
2. At national level, Standards Bureau shall act as the Secretariat of the National ABSNET.

D. Housekeeping

1. In line with what has already been stated in these guidelines, the National ABSNET will take the lead in the creation of policy relative to the ground rules for the conduct of meeting, attendance to meetings, condition on continued membership, resolution of issues and grievances, and other related matters.

VI. DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND GENERAL FUNCTIONS:

A. General Functions of the three (3) ABSNET Structures

1. Cluster ABSNET

- a. Promote registration, licensing and accreditation to SWDAs involved in the implementation of SWD programs and services in their respective places through the conduct of orientation and advocacy activities.
- b. Conduct consultation dialogues with SWD agencies that are not yet registered, licensed and accredited to clarify issues and concerns relative to registration, licensing and accreditation and promote compliance to SWD standards.
- c. Participate in the review/amendment of social welfare and development standards, policies, rules and regulations adaptive to their programs and services and to the area/locality.
- d. Assist the DSWD in monitoring and conduct of validation assessment on the existence of SWDAs applying for registration/licensing. The SWDAs will have an assignment by member to visit the applicant organization in their area to validate information provided in the documents submitted.
- e. Submission within one week after the site visit the registration / licensing / accreditation validation report to the DSWD Field Office concerned, signed by the Chairperson.
- f. Establish, maintain and update directory of SWDAs operating in the local area. Submit the same list to the Regional ABSNET copy furnish the Field Office quarterly.
- g. Ensure close coordination with the SU of the Field Office to be updated of those with newly issued Registration, License and Accreditation.

- h. Exchange knowledge, experience and ideas as well as good practices to be replicated among social welfare agencies.
- i. Attend quarterly meetings with ABSNET cluster members as venue for updating exchanging ideas, discussion of issues and concerns, sharing of best practices, planning and evaluation as well as fostering camaraderie among ABSNET members.
- j. Promote the SWD standards by facilitating/providing technical assistance to SWDAs application for registration, licensing and accreditation and the monitoring of existing SWDAs.

2. Regional ABSNET

- a. Participate in the review/amendment of social welfare and development standards, policies, rules and regulations adoptive to the area/locality.
- b. Advocate/Promote social welfare and development standards to be observed by the member SWDAs and those newly operating SWDAs in the region.
- c. Assist the DSWD in the validation assessment of social welfare agencies.
- d. Establish, maintain and update directory of SWDAs operating in the region based from the validation report from the Cluster which is submitted to the FOs on a quarterly basis.
- e. Adopt and issue resolution for the effective management of the federation and benefits of its member agencies.
- f. Participate in the DSWD-FO Review Committee session whenever necessary.
- g. Exchange knowledge, experience and ideas as well as best practices to be replicated among social welfare agencies.
- h. Represent the SWDAs in regional activities along social welfare and development concerns upon recommendation/endorsement of DSWD.
- i. Assist in re-activating non-functional clusters and intervene on issues/concerns that could not be resolved at the level of Cluster ABSNET.

3. National ABSNET

- a. Improve communication, coordination and collaboration efforts between the DSWD and among its member SWDAs and other partners in social welfare and development.
- b. Ensure proper presentation in the formulation and implementation of policies, standards and programs of SWDAs.
- c. Assist the DSWD in the conduct of ABSNET consultation every three years and other capacity building for SWDAs.
- d. Participate in the National Review Committee session whenever there is an appealed complaint against a SWDA.
- e. Participate in the selection of Most Outstanding SWDA as endorsed by DSWD and other entities.
- f. Support the DSWD in the gathering/sharing of the national situation and good practices of SWDAs.

- g. Represent the SWDAs in national and international conference/forum/workshop along social welfare and development concerns upon recommendation/endorsement of DSWD.

B. Duties and Responsibilities of the Officers:

1. Cluster ABSNET Officers

a. Chairperson

- i.* Preside in all meetings of Cluster ABSNET.
- ii.* Oversee the activities of Cluster ABSNET.
- iii.* Carry out and implement the approved work and financial plan of Cluster ABSNET.
- iv.* Represent Cluster ABSNET in any meetings/ consultations related to social welfare and development activities.
- v.* Submit project proposal to DSWD for mobilization and capability building activities.
- vi.* Submits the quarterly updated list of SWDAs to the Field Office, copy furnish the Regional ABSNET.
- vii.* Convene the General Assembly and prepare an Annual and Accomplishment Report of ABSNET.
- viii.* Coordinate closely with DSWD Field Office in the resolution of issues and concerns related to registration, licensing, and accreditation of SWDAs.
- ix.* Ensure all information in the ABSNET directory is updated.
- x.* Ensure that the stated functions of ABSNET in the Guidelines are observed and complied.

b. Vice-Chairperson

- i.* Assist the Chairperson in carrying out the function of ABSNET.
- ii.* Exercise all the powers and perform all duties of the Chairperson during the absence or incapacity of the latter. However, since there will be two Vice-Chairpersons, order of succession will be decided by the Board.
- iii.* Perform duties that maybe assigned by the Chairperson.
- iv.* Carry out all the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson once the current Chairperson wins in the Regional ABSNET and only when selected by the majority of the members to do so.

c. Secretary

- i.* Submit quarterly accomplishment report and minutes of quarterly meetings to FO-Standards Unit.
- ii.* Act as the rapporteur during the meetings and submit report to the Chairperson for approval.
- iii.* Give notices of meetings and/or relevant information to Cluster ABSNET group officers and members thru verbal or

written information or other means of communication.

- iv. Be responsible for the safekeeping of all the official records of the cluster: notice of meetings, minutes of meetings, proceedings and/or photo documentation of conferences, directory of SWDAs, etc.

d. Secretariat

- i. Assist in the preparation of project proposals regarding the ABSNET activities;
- ii. Ensure allocation of budget per approved Work and Financial Plan for the capability building, mobilization and other activities related to performance of their assistive roles along regulatory services;
- iii. Provides technical assistance in the implementation of ABSNET activities.
- iv. Serves as coordinator of ABSNET activities.

e. Local Government Units Representative

- i. Coordinate with other P/C/M SWDO to submit reports regarding SWD agencies not yet registered, licensed and accredited by DSWD.
- ii. Assist SWDA operating in their area of jurisdiction in securing permits and accreditation from the LGUs.
- iii. Explore the possibility of augmenting fund support to the program implementations of ABSNET members.

f. Committee Members

- i. Perform the assigned roles in each committee they are member to

g. ABSNET members

- i. Comply with the guidelines, rules and regulations of the Cluster ABSNET.
- ii. Attend the Annual General Membership Meeting/Assembly and/or other meetings convened by the Cluster Chairperson.
- iii. Elect the sectoral representative.
- iv. Elect Committee membership.

2. Regional ABSNET

a. Chairperson

- i. Presides in all Regional ABSNET meetings
- ii. Oversees the activities of Regional ABSNET
- iii. Carries out and implement the approved work and financial plan of Regional ABSNET
- iv. Represents Regional ABSNET in any meetings/consultations related to social welfare and development activities at the regional level

- v. Submits project proposal to DSWD for mobilization and capability building activities
 - vi. Convenes general assembly
 - vii. Coordinates closely with DSWD Field Office in the resolution of issues and concerns for the effective management of the Regional ABSNET and benefits of its member agencies
 - viii. Submits Regional ABSNET quarterly and annual accomplishment reports to Field Office following the attached template (Annex 2).
 - ix. Ensures that the stated functions of Regional ABSNET in the Guidelines are observed and complied with.
 - x. Issues Certificate of Membership of the SWDA applying for Registration/Licensing/Accreditation.
 - xi. Attendance to deliberation in Handling of Complaints with the Field Office Review Committee (FORC).
- b. Vice Chairpersons
- i. Assist the Chairperson in carrying out the functions of Regional ABSNET
 - ii. Exercise all the powers and perform all duties of the Chairperson during the absence or incapacity of the latter
 - iii. Perform duties that may be assigned by the Chairperson
- c. Secretary
- i. Submit quarterly accomplishment report and minutes of quarterly meetings to FO-Standards Unit.
 - ii. Act as the rapporteur during the meetings and submit report to the Chairperson for approval.
 - iii. Give notices of meetings and/or relevant information to Regional ABSNET officers and members thru verbal or written information or other means of communication.
 - iv. Be responsible for the safekeeping of all the official records of the Regional ABSNET: notice of meetings, minutes of meetings, proceedings and/or photo documentation of conferences, directory of SWDAs, etc.
- d. Secretariat
- i. Assist in the preparation of project proposals regarding the ABSNET activities;
 - ii. Ensure allocation of budget per approved Work and Financial Plan for the capability building, mobilization and other activities related to performance of their assistive roles along regulatory services;
 - iii. Provides technical assistance in the implementation of ABSNET activities.
 - iv. Serves as coordinator of ABSNET activities.
- e. Board Members
- i. Represents their members during the Regional ABSNET meetings

- ii.* Conduct feedback sessions/meetings with their respective cluster member on ABSNET activities.

f. Committee Members

- i.* Perform the assigned roles in each committee they are member.

3. National ABSNET

a. Chairperson

- i.* Presides in all National ABSNET meetings
- ii.* Oversees all activities of National ABSNET
- iii.* Carries out and implement the approved and work financial plan of National ABSNET
- iv.* Represents National ABSNET in any meetings/consultations related to social welfare and development activities at the national level
- v.* Represents National ABSNET in national bodies like the Philippine Social Work Consortium
- vi.* Submits project proposal to DSWD for mobilization and capability building activities
- vii.* Assists the Standards Bureau in the conduct of ABSNET National Consultation
- viii.* Coordinates closely with DSWD Standards Bureau in the resolution of issues and concerns for the effective management of the National ABSNET
- ix.* Submits National ABSNET semestral and annual accomplishment reports to the Standards Bureau
- x.* Ensures all information in the ABSNET directory of officers and members is updated.
- xi.* Ensures that the stated functions of National ABSNET in the Guidelines are observed and complied with.
- xii.* Attendance to deliberation in Handling of Complaints with the Central Office Review Committee (CORC).

b. Vice Chairperson for Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao

- i.* Assists the Chairperson in carrying out functions of National ABSNET
- ii.* Exercises all the powers and performs all duties of the Chairperson during the absence or incapacity of the latter.
- iii.* Represents National ABSNET as delegated at their respective islands all National ABSNET activities
- iv.* Coordinates all national activities to their respective regions and island clusters.
- v.* Promotes and supervises the operations of Regional ABSNET
- vi.* Performs duties that may be assigned by the Chairperson

c. Secretary

- i.* Submit quarterly accomplishment report and minutes of quarterly meetings to FO-Standards Unit.
- ii.* Act as the rapporteur during the meetings and submit

- report to the Chairperson for approval.
 - iii.* Give notices of meetings and/or relevant information to National ABSNET officers and members thru verbal or written information or other means of communication.
 - iv.* Be responsible for the safekeeping of all the official records of the National ABSNET: notice of meetings, minutes of meetings, proceedings and/or photo documentation of conferences, directory of SWDAs, etc.
 - d. Secretariat
 - i.* Assist in the preparation of project proposals regarding the ABSNET activities;
 - ii.* Ensure allocation of budget per approved Work and Financial Plan for the capability building, mobilization and other activities related to performance of their assistive roles along regulatory services;
 - iii.* Provides technical assistance in the implementation of ABSNET activities.
 - e. Board Members
 - i.* Leads the Committee to be organized in any national ABSNET activities
 - ii.* Assists the Standards Bureau in monitoring SWDAs implementing SWD programs and services in more than one region
 - iii.* Assists the DSWD in lobbying the priority bills affecting SWDAs
 - iv.* Assists the DSWD in publication and advocacy of good practices of SWDAs
 - f. Committee Members
 - i.* Perform the assigned roles in each committee they are member to

C. Committees

1. Policy Review - The Committee is in charge of ensuring that all Regional ABSNET and National ABSNET officers and members shall receive a copy of the draft guidelines for comment. The Committee is also be responsible in setting the deadline to be observed by members in submitting of the comments in consideration of the deadline set by the Standards Bureau. It is also responsible in consolidating the comments and preparing a ready document to be forwarded to the Standards Bureau.
2. Membership and Communication - There is nothing more effective way in increasing the number of members than recruitment of a

person who is of equal standing. Hence, it is imperative that this Committee be formed. However, the National ABSNET's Membership Committee's role would only be oversight as the bulk of the roles and responsibilities of the Committee shall be found in the Cluster. The members of Membership and communication committee in the cluster shall have, but not limited to, the following responsibilities:

- a. Contact prospective members by all means, in person, by phone, letters (snail or electronic) and/or in social media.
 - b. Contact present members whose R/L/A is about to expire on the status of their R/L/A.
 - c. Welcome and give recognition to all new members.
 - d. Informs all the Officers and Board members of any updates or news affecting their group.
3. Capability Building - in charge in the placement of systematic approach to learning and development of the members. The committee shall continuously identify, build and sustain targeted capabilities needed to continuously improve.

VII. ABSNET MONITORING

The monitoring of the ABSNET shall be observed through the following:

1. **Meetings of ABSNET ExeCom and Board.**
 - a. *Cluster ABSNET* - will hold its meeting quarterly
 - b. *Regional ABSNET* - will hold its meeting once per semester
 - c. *National ABSNET* - will hold its meeting once per semester

Special meetings of the ExeCom and Board may be held and shall not be limited to physical meetings as they can use the technology through social media, skype, tele/video-conferencing, messenger and other methods to hold such.

The Cluster ABSNET, Regional ABSNET and National ABSNET shall among others discuss issues and concerns related to the regulatory functions of the Department which they will forward to the concerned Field Office or in National ABSNET's case, the Standards Bureau at once.

2. **Minutes of the Meetings.** All minutes of the meetings of the cluster and Regional ABSNET shall be forwarded to the Standards Unit in the Field Office while the National ABSNET shall forward its minutes to the Standards Bureau. The Field Office shall endorse the minutes of the cluster to Regional ABSNET and minutes of Regional ABSNET to National ABSNET, copy furnish

Standards Bureau. All minutes shall be for appropriate action of the Standards Bureau.

3. **Accomplishment and Financial Reports.** The reports shall be submitted to the concerned DSWD Field Offices every 10th day of January of the preceding year which will be forwarded to the Standards Bureau at once.
4. The National ABSNET, though has scheduled semestral meetings, may be called by the Chairperson whenever necessary or upon written request to take urgent or pending matters which shall be stated in the notice.

VIII. FUNDING SUPPORT TO ABSNET

1. The Standards Bureau shall:
 - a. Allocate funds for the capability building activities of the Regional ABSNET to the FOs upon submission and approval of project proposal for the purpose.
 - b. Provide financial augmentation to the Regional ABSNET thru the FOs until 2019 for its mobilization funds. The FOs shall take charge of the Cluster and Regional ABSNET budget by integrating it in the FOs annual Work and Financial plan starting 2020.
 - c. Advocate to FOs to ensure that mobilization funds shall be utilized for its operational expenses, which would include transportation expenses of ABSNET officers during visits to SWDAs, meals during orientation/consultative/assessment meetings, supplies and materials and other related expenses.
 - d. Allocate funds for the capability building and mobilization activities of the National ABSNET.

2. Subsidy

a. *Cluster ABSNET*

The Cluster officers and members who are not employees of the Department and LGUs shall have their valid expenses reimbursed at the Field Office during their conduct of validation visits and consultations with non-registered, non-licensed and non-accredited SWDAs not exceeding two (2) in a month, subject to existing government accounting auditing rules and guidelines.

Officers and members who are employees of the Department and LGUs shall follow the usual rules and regulations of the Department in reimbursing and/or liquidating of their cash advances used during their performance of their set task.

b. Regional ABSNET

The Regional ABSNET ExeCom members who are not employees of the Department and the LGUs shall reimburse their valid expenses at the Field Office for every Regional Meeting they have attended not exceeding two (2) times in a year based on the accomplishment report submitted and recommendation of the concerned DSWD Field Office.

c. National ABSNET

The National ABSNET Board who are not employees of the Department and the LGUs shall their valid expenses reimbursed at the Field Office for every National Meeting attended not exceeding two (2) times in a year based on the accomplishment report submitted and recommendation of the concerned DSWD Field Office.

IX. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

1. Field Office

- a. Ensures that all Cluster ABSNET and Regional ABSNET are knowledgeable on the regulatory policies/guidelines to enable them become active in advocating compliance to the social welfare and development standards among its members. All set standards that cannot be complied with by the SWDA or the guidelines that are noted difficult to understand must be reflected in the minutes of meeting.
- b. Ensures functionality of Cluster and Regional ABSNET.
- c. Ensures that a staff from Standards Unit is assigned as the secretariat in every ABSNET activity, whether cluster or regional. S/He shall be responsible in preparing all needed documents during regular and special meetings and conduct of elections.
- d. Ensures that Standards Units participate during quarterly Cluster ABSNET meeting and Regional ABSNET semestral meetings both as the Secretarial and as a technical person of the FO.
- e. Provides technical assistance to ABSNET members in terms of organizational development and capability building.
- f. Prepares regional accomplishment reports and identify ABSNET's good practices.
- g. Issues identification cards to all ABSNET officers and sectoral representatives at the regional and cluster level.
- h. Ensures that all elected officers of each Cluster ABSNET is organized and present for the election of Regional ABSNET officers.
- i. Ensures that mobilization funds of Cluster ABSNET and Regional ABSNET that conduct monitoring of SWDAs shall be included in the Regional Work and Financial Plan starting 2020.

- j.* Monitors the operation and set activities of the ABSNET.
- k.* Award the Certificate of Registration/License/Accreditation during FO flag ceremony or during ABSNET meetings.

2. Standards Bureau

- a.* The Standards Bureau shall provide the necessary consultative and technical services to National ABSNET and DSWD FO on ABSNET issues and concerns.
- b.* Assists in the conduct of National ABSNET consultation every three (3) years with the participation of National ABSNET; Regional ABSNET and Cluster ABSNET chairpersons (in time for the election of National ABSNET).
- c.* Ensures functionality of National ABSNET in terms of performing their duties and functions as stated in the guidelines.
- d.* Provides augmentation for the mobilization funds and capability building funds of Cluster ABSNET and Regional ABSNET until 2019.
- e.* Ensures the issuance of the identification cards for all National ABSNET officers and Board Members
- f.* Continuous provision of TA to Field Office and National ABSNET /Regional ABSNET officers on new laws/policies/guidelines on regulatory functions.
- g.* Assist in the conduct of National ABSNET semestral meetings.

3. ABSNET

- a.* Performs the functions as stated in the guidelines.
- b.* Keeps records of the minutes of assessment meetings/conferences for monitoring purposes.
- c.* For Cluster ABSNET to issue a certificate of membership of a new SWDA applying for R/L/A.
- d.* For Regional ABSNET to issue a certificate of good standing to SWDAs applying for renewal of R/L/A upon consultation with the concerned Cluster ABSNET.
- e.* For Regional ABSNET to provide SB, through the Field Office, an updated SWDA Directory using the attached template (Annex 1).
- f.* For National ABSNET to issue a certificate of good standing to SWDAs operating in more than one region applying for renewal of R/L/A upon consultation to the concerned Regional ABSNET.
- g.* For National ABSNET to establish Facebook page that can be accessed by all ABSNET members.
- h.* Recommends SWDAs for the most outstanding SWDA/PANATA/Best NGO.
- i.* To conduct national consultation every three years
- j.* To ensure the conduct of meetings as indicated in the guidelines.
- k.* Prepares project proposal related to ABSNET activities.

X. INFORMATION DESSIMINATION

DSWD Field Offices, the LGUs and Social Welfare and Development Agencies shall be provided with copies of this Department Memorandum Circular.

XI. EFFECTIVITY

This order shall take effect immediately and supersedes all other DSWD guidelines and issuances on ABSNET.

Issued this 27th day of February 2018 at Quezon City.



EMMANUEL A. LEYCO
Officer-In-Charge



Certified True Copy:



MYRNA H. REYES

Records & Archives Mgt. Section

**DSWD Regional ABSNET Report
 UPDATED SWDA DIRECTORY
 Field Office _____
 For the _____ semester of 20____**

NAME OF AGENCY MEMBER Address/Contact Details (Telephone number, Fax, email, website)	Contact Person / Position / mobile number	STATUS			PROGRAMS AND SERVICES	SERVICE DELIVERY MODE	CLIENTELE	AREAS OF OPERATIONS	REMARKS
		R	L	A					

Annex 2

ABSNET ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

For _____ Quarter of 20____
Field Office _____

Total Number of Clusters:
Total Number of Members:

Regional Officers:

NAME OF THE AGENCY	NAME OF THE REPRESENTATIVE	POSITION	SECTORAL GROUP REPRESENTED
		Chairperson	
		Vice Chairperson	
		Vice Chairperson	
		Secretary	
		Policy Review Committee Head	
		Capability Building Committee Head	
		Membership and Communication Committee Head	
		LGU Representative	
		DSWD Centers and Institution Representative (for Regional ABSNET)	

Members:

NAME OF THE AGENCY	NAME OF THE REPRESENTATIVE	DATE OF MEMBERSHIP	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Highlights of Accomplishments:

1. Activities Conducted
2. Number of SWDAS with no R/L/A monitored
3. Number of SWDAs visited for R/L/A

4. Number of SWDAs recommended for R/L/A
5. Number of SWDAs with new R/L/A
6. Number of SWDAs with R/L/A to expire within six months

Issues/Concerns and Recommendations:

Prepared by:

Chairperson
Regional ABSNET
Field Office _____