

IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES TO ACCESS FUNDS, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR PROJECTS UNDER THE DAR-PBD PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT FUND

DAR MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 04, S. OF 2011, May 18, 2011

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I. PURPOSE/RATIONALE/BACKGROUND

Republic Act 9700, or the CARPER, affirms the mandate of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to complete its Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD) target and provide sufficient and appropriate support services to the farmer-beneficiaries, through the Program Beneficiaries Development (PBD).

Towards this end, A 9700 hopes to implement an integrated of land tenure improvement (LTI) and program beneficiaries development (PBD) strategy to ensure that support services interventions are made available to potential/identified farmer-beneficiaries appropriate to their needs, at any given time within the pre and post coverage of the CARP-covered land/s. DAR Administrative Order No. 05, Series of 2010, details the implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for Support Services, particularly the interface between LTI and PBD.

Consistent with the Integrated Area Development (IAD) approach previously and presently adopted by the Department to define area-specific and demand-driven programs, the management required the DAR provincial offices to define their PBD priorities and needs depending on such peculiarities as: a) tenurial security, b) development maturity of ARB organizations, c) available crops, d) market opportunities and e) presence of convergence partners. Thus, Memorandum No. 292 series of 2010, as further clarified by Memorandum No. 64 Series of 2011, were issued and promulgated, which required the DARPOs to formulate and submit their pilot models or PBD.

For its part, the DAR Support Services Office (DAR-SSO) have allocated funds for proposed projects, within the pilot models and included in the provincial plans, the would primarily impact on the ARBs' quality of life, through increased income and improved farm productivity.

Thus, this Circular prescribes the guidelines on accessing PBD support fund and adopt a standard format on project proposal and appraisal templates that will "projectize" PBD.

II. COVERAGE

The rules and procedures under these Memorandum Circular apply to all PBD "soft" projects and programs of the Department proposed for funding under FAPs/ODA and/ or ARF/Non-FAPs.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following are the guiding principles of this Memorandum Circular:

- > The projects should start with "the end in mind". It must be geared towards development results and impacts.

- > Projects are to be considered as joint undertaking or partnership between and among the DAR, and the proponent and the project beneficiaries, hence cost and/or equity sharing among the project stakeholders to implement PBD projects is a must.
- > Appraisal and approval are based on merits of each project proposal.
- > Due to limited available funds, project approval will be a competitive process. Project approval shall be based on the PBD and LTI realities of the provinces and the provincial PBD priorities as agreed between the DAR Executive Committee and DARPO.
- > The DAR is not a funding agency and as such, these templates will not be announced and there will be no open “call for proposals.”

IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT AND CRITERIA

a. For Project Proponents

Groups eligible to access the DAR-PBD partnership Support Fund are:

- > DAR field offices, (DARROs/DARPOs/DARMOs);
- > LGUs, priority to be given to 5th and 6th class municipalities;
- > Non-Government Organizations (NGOs);
- > Academic institutions;
- > Business development service (BDS) providers; and
- > Peoples’; organizations (POs) and ARB cooperatives, among others.

To qualify, NGOs, BDS providers, academic institutions, POs, and cooperatives should:

1. Be registered and/or accredited with the Security and Exchange Commission, Cooperative Development Agency, DOLE-Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC);
2. Show proof of having implemented/managed projects successfully, regardless if these are similar or not in nature and complexity to their proposed project;
3. Submit authenticated copy of their Constitution and by-laws;
4. Submit Audited financial statements showing among others, the organization’s total current assets and liabilities, stamped “received” by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institution, for the preceding calendar year which should not be earlier than three (3) years from the date of submission of project proposal and,
5. Submit a sworn affidavit of the Secretary of the NGO/PO that none of its incorporators, organizers, director or officials is an agent of or related by consanguinity or affinity up to the fourth civil degree to the officials of the DAR authorized to process and/or approve proposal, the MOA and the release of funds;
6. Proponents should not have unliquidated obligations from DAR.

b) For Projects

Projects proposed for funding should subscribe to the current PBD priorities of enterprise development (see attached Annex D[*]) and providing access to social, health and water and sanitation services, among others. Project proposals may be on any of the following Support Services Office (SSO) programs (attached as Annex D), as stated in Memorandum No. 64 Series of 2011, to wit;

1. Agricultural Productivity Development for existing and new ARBs;
2. Agri-Based Micro-Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Development;
3. Agri-based Industry Development (value-chain approach);
4. Value-chain Financing Development;
5. ARB Market Development;
6. Value-chain and Agribusiness Capability Development for ARBs; and

7. Enterprise-based capacity enhancement for PBD implementers.

Proposed projects should stipulate a counterpart share in the cost of at least 30% of the total cost. These may be in the form of labor, materials or equipment, facilities, etc. The counterpart can be shared by the proponent and beneficiary organization and other stakeholders, such as other government agencies, LGUs and/or the private sector. However, the proponent and beneficiary organization should provide for at least 15% of the total project cost.

V. PROCEDURES FOR PROJECT PROPOSAL AND APPRAISAL

To facilitate the work of both the proponent partner/organizations as well as the DAR personnel, templates for project appraisal and evaluation were designed. Three templates can be used - for project proposal, desk appraisal and project accomplishment report - these were formulated in keeping with the project development cycle of project design application, appraisal, approval, implementation, accomplishment reporting, monitoring and evaluation, financial auditing and completion.

A. Project Proposal

A project proposal, based on the DAR-SSO Project Proposal Format (attached as Annex A[*]) is the main document that the project proponent shall submit to the concerned DARPO/DARRO. The proposal should contain the following data/ information:

- a. Project Identifying Data
- b. Proponent Organization Identifying Data
- c. Beneficiary Organization Identifying Data
- d. Collaborating Organization Identifying Data
- e. Project Description (include logframe analysis)
- f. Project Management
- g. Financial and Economic Soundness
- h. Monitoring, Evaluation and Risk Assessment
- i. Sustainability Mechanisms
- j. Community Participation
- k. Promotion of Gender Equality
- l. Promotion of Sound Environmental Practices
- m. Funding Request
- n. Work Plan
- o. Target Major Final Output

A Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) should form part of the Project Description (a sample LFA is attached as Annex E[*].)

The template for the Project Proposal is to be answered and followed by all organizations including DARPO and DARRO requesting for “soft projects” funding support.

The proposed project should subscribe to the DAR priorities and should consider DAR provincial plans agreed with the DAR Executive Committee. It presents the activity design intended for implementation. It is the first step in the activity preparation process and includes background information and analysis to support the design. It also provides performance indicators and measures. The questions in the templates should be answered completely. As such, the project proponent must closely observe the format and address the guidelines.

B. Project Appraisal and Approval (to be accomplished by DAR units only)

B.1 Project Appraisal

The Project Appraisal template (see as Annex B[*]) is the instrument that will be used by the DAR to evaluate the project proposals submitted. The DAR shall score the project proposal to assess its suitability for funding support.

a. Projects proposed by DARPOs

For project proposed by the DARPO the initial appraisal is done by the DARRO through the RSSD. If the appraisal is positive the project proposal is endorsed to the regional DAR Executive Committee composed of RD, ARDO, ARDA, and CARPOs. If the DARRO Executive Committee approves it, the project proposal is subsequently recommended to the DARCO-SSO for approval.

b. Projects proposed by provincial local partners

LGUs especially 5[th] and 6[th] municipalities, non-government organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, Business Development Service (BDS) providers, and People's organizations (POs) and cooperatives may access partnership support fund from the DAR. The partner-proponent shall submit project proposal to the DARPO.

The DARPO through the BDCD shall ensure that the proponent has complied with the eligibility requirements. The BDCD shall review the completeness of documents and validate whether or not the project beneficiaries are ARBs. When the project proposal is in order, the PARO shall submit the document to the DARRO for appraisal and subsequently endorse to the DARCO-SSO for approval.

c. Projects proposed by DARROs and Proponents with region-wide coverage

Proposal submitted by the DARROs and proponents with region-wide coverage shall be appraised by the DARCO-SSO through the BARBD, PDMS, FAPs unit concern and SSO. The respective appraising unit shall endorse the proposed project for approval to the Undersecretary for Support Services Offices/Project Implementation Office.

d. Projects proposed by national partners

Non-government organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, business development service (BDS) providers, and peoples' organizations (POs) proposing project catering to various regions but within its operational coverage shall submit their project proposal (using Annex A) to DARCO through SSO.

The SSO shall forward the proposal to the concerned DARCO unit (BARBD, PDMS, FAPs Unit or SSO staff) for appraisal, which findings shall then be presented to the SSO Executive Committee and subsequently endorse for approval to the Undersecretary for SSO/PIO.

B.2 Process of appraisal and approval

Upon receipt of a complete project proposal, the assigned DARRO/ BARBD/PDMS/ SSO staff reviews the proposal using the Desk Appraisal Form for Project Proposals. Using the nine criteria which coincides with the Proposal format, the project officer assigns a value for each item, with 3 as Very Good, 2 as Good, 1 as Satisfactory and 0 Unsatisfactory. Projects which garner at least 22 points out of the possible 27 points are deemed eligible and subject to further project development. Projects which receive 15 to 21 points qualify for further development while projects with a score of 8 o 14 points are not prioritized and those which have a score of 0 to 7 points are rejected. Project proposals which do not pass the DAR review are immediately returned to the proponents.

For the project proposals that go to the next level of project development, the DARRO/ RSSD shall discuss with the project proponent as to how to further improve the proposal. Site appraisal by DARRO/RSSD for proposal submitted/forwarded by DARPO follows. Aside from meeting the proponents, the DARRO/RSSD shall discuss

the proposal with the project stakeholders and beneficiaries, and the proponent organization's Board of Directors (BOD). Further validation and improvement of the original project proposals shall be done.

Proposals submitted by DARROs and national partners to DARCO shall undergo the same process as discussed above, which shall be carried out by the appropriate office doing the appraisal.

The revised project document should include the revised Work and Financial Plan (WFP) detailing the schedule of project activities, target outputs, and corresponding budgetary requirements. For non-DAR proponent, a BOD Resolution owning and taking responsibility for the project being proposed shall also be required. The final proposal shall be endorsed by DARRO/RSSD to the DAR Regional Executive Committee for deliberations it recommends the proposal to DARSSO-/PIO for approval.

If the project proposal gets a negative rating it does not go to the next level. The evaluating DAR unit can either reject the proposal or ask the project proponent to make changes. When the project is approved, the DARCO-SSO shall sub-allocate the budget and program the releases of funds.

Approved project shall be covered with a Memorandum of Agreement and all pertinent government rules and procedures (e.g. Procurement Act, COA, rules, and etc.) shall apply. Any violation of the terms of the MOA like fund diversion shall be ground for project termination. The DARCO shall be the signing party for national partnerships and the DARROs for local engagements. No signing of MOA at the regional level shall be undertaken unless the notice of approval has been issued by the Undersecretary for Support Services.

For project proposals submitted, at different levels, which are to be funded under ODA (Fund 102,), the approval and foregoing of MOA shall be in accordance with the policy and procedures prescribed by specific foreign-assisted project.

C. Project Implementation and Project Accomplishment/Progress Report (to be accomplished by the project partner.

The project implementation shall start as soon as the project is approved and the first tranche is released to project proponent.

The approved budget is released through progress billing or in tranches, depending on the type of project and schedule of milestone as described in the approved project proposal and work and financial plan, and is subject to the existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations. There will be a 15% retention which will be released only upon certification of the project completion by the DARRO/RSSD and accepted/concurred with by the DAR Regional Executive Committee concerned.

The Project Progress Report (see Annex C[*]) is a requirement before the release of the next tranche. It is the basic monitoring and reporting tool of each project. The report illustrates the implementation of the project and performance of the partner organization. It looks at key milestones and actions that are crucial to tracking DAR's effective contribution to the project and rural development in general.

The report should include discussion of objectives and the status of project implementation and describes the project activities by making a comparison between planned activities and actual activities, the identification of the problems met and the actions, taken, the gains and benefits derived from the project with reference to the baseline data and the work plan for the succeeding tranche period. The accomplishment report likewise outlines the sustainability measures being put in place.

This report also contains the expenditures of project operations for the period covered as well as the cumulative expenditures and variance report on the utilization of DAR support as against the approved budget. Audited

financial statements shall also be required. Therefore, the financial report also gives information such as, but not limited to actual, expenditures for the period as compared to the approved budget both for expenditures drawn from the DAR grant and those drawn from the counterpart funds. These are supported by schedules of receipts, disbursement, and expenditures.

The DARPO and DARRO/RSSD shall evaluate the submitted Project Progress Report. Upon positive monitoring feedback from the DARPO and DARRO/RSSD, through the submission of the evaluation report and certification from the DARRO Execom endorsing the release, the SSO shall facilitate/process the release of next tranche. The percentage of fund releases is dependent upon the percentage of accomplishment and funds liquidation requirements. As a trigger for the next tranche release, the Project Progress Report should be submitted a month before the next tranche payment is due so that there would be no gap in the flow of funds needed by the project as reflected in the approved WRF.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation and Financial Audits (involving both the project partners and the DAR)

Monitoring and evaluation are a continuing task of both the partner organization and DAR. Further site visits, project reviews and financial audits are undertaken all throughout the project duration. These ensure the high level quantitative and qualitative impacts on the ARBs and ARCs. Good project management and implementation is an essential ingredient for sustainability. It is important that the project partners, the DARPOs and the DARROs answer all the questions and forms to ensure that all pertinent data are put in place for the M & E.

E. Project Completion (involving both the project partners and the DAR)

At the end of the project term, the project partner has to submit a Project Completion Report (PCR) covering both physical and financial aspects together with supporting documents/proof of evidence that the programmed activities were undertaken. The SSO shall evaluate and verify the PCR through the regional and provincial offices concerned. PCRs should be certified by the DARPO and endorsed by the DARRO Execom to SSO for final release of partnership support funds. The project accomplishments should include the impacts and significant changes brought about by the project in the lives of the individual men and women ARBs as well their household and the community.

VI. REPORTING SYSTEM

Activities conducted, as stipulated in the time frame of the Project proposal should be captured as accomplishments, for the said reporting period, based on set Performance Indicators under the PBD-MFOs. Reporting of such shall follow the procedure as set forth under MC No. 17 series of 2010.

Outputs of the activities of projects in ARCs should be reflected in the quarterly/semestral and annual ARC Monitoring and Tracking System (ARCMTS), of the concerned DARMO/DARPO and DARRO.

VII. ATTACHMENT FORMS

1. Annex A – DAR-SSO project proposal format;
2. Annex B – DAR-SSO project proposal appraisal format;
3. Annex C – DAR-SSO project report format; and
4. Annex D – PBD Programs (based on Memorandum 64 s. 2011)
5. Annex E – Sample Log Frame

VIII. EFFECTIVITY

This order supersedes any other issuances/guidelines inconsistent with it, and shall take effect immediately.

Adopted: 18 May 2011

(SGD). VIRGILIO R. DELOS REYES

Secretary

[*] Text Available at Office of the National Administrative Register, U.P. Law Complex, Diliman, Quezon City.

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