



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT of AGRARIAN REFORM

ELLIPTICAL ROAD, DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY • TELS. 928-7031 TO 39

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 08
Series of 2007

SUBJECT: **MECHANISM OF OPERATION TO SET UP AN EFFECTIVE AND FUNCTIONAL CONSULTATION SCHEME THROUGH THE SANGGUNIAN NG MGA MAGSASAKANG AGRARYO [SMA]**

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The very essence of involvement towards the successful implementation of the agrarian reform program depends on the quality of participation of all stakeholders and in all efforts where cooperation, trust, confidence, truth and honest-to-goodness assistance is the one pervading and leading the way, no unturned corners will be left behind.

Previous to this, there have been so many attempts for multi-diverse problems, issues needs and concerns to meet in one place and discuss ways, approaches, means, techniques, strategies and tactical moves relative to agrarian reform and all have merely opened the wounds of apathy, neglect, abuse, corruption, graft, inefficiency and bureaucratic red tape which circumstances eventually transpired because of the commodity that is considered the centerpiece of widespread poverty in the country – the concentration of agricultural land and wealth for that matter, to the very few – the landed gentry.

Enactment of laws deemed beneficial to landless farmers, small cultivators, tenant-lessees and agricultural workers was not enough to uplift their lives and with so many lapses in the processes of implementation and with human touch fully influencing what should have been the right course for agrarian reform, the program has suffered setbacks one after the other.

The time comes where the whole weight settles and at this period of implementation of agrarian reform where operational kinks and legal bottlenecks are spread over the landscape of the program, it therefore needs an effective vehicle that transforms problems into bits and pieces of accomplishments facilitative of gradually easing out friction at the field level and directly pinpointing the crux of such non-implementation of CARP in certain areas.

The introduction of Sanggunian ng mga Magsasakang Agraryo [SMA] is poised to create an atmosphere of confidence at the highest level with DAR at one end and the farmers, CSOs and other stakeholders at the other end, which literally has one single purpose – to build an effective and functional alliance, levels of partnerships and collaborative engagements with all the stakeholders of the program.

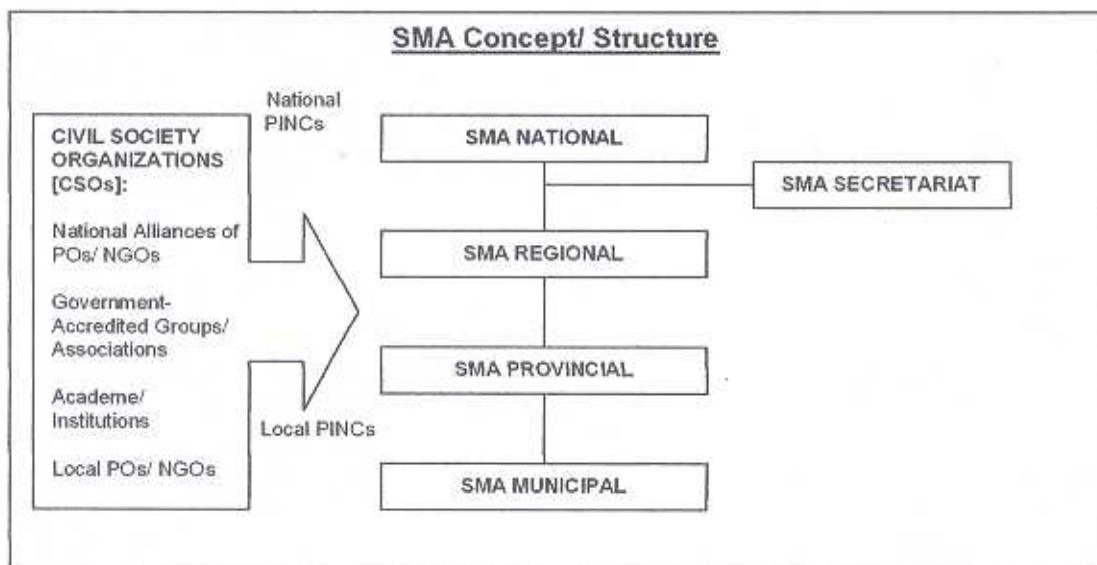
II. THE CONCEPT OF SANGGUNIAN NG MGA MAGSASAKANG AGRARYO

Veering away from the traditional scheme of purely conducting dialogues and facilitating consultations, the Sanggunian ng mga Magsasakang Agraryo [SMA] will not only involve itself in such activities but will also look into the possibility of developing organizations

and creating partnership schemes for the purpose of making successful the implementation of agrarian reform on a joint and concerted basis.

This SMA as a created entity shall directly link with the civil society organizations, the academe, institutions and other aggrupations, local or foreign, with leanings on agrarian reform and shall be the prime recommendatory body that will seek to facilitate the resolution of problems, issues, needs, and concerns [PINC] being raised by those involved and regularly participating in the different levels of SMA discussions.

The SMA at the Central Office level shall also be replicated at the field levels, with the regional, provincial and municipal offices also establishing their own respective structures in order to ensure that local issues and other concerns will be immediately addressed at the proper level required for its resolution.



As the by-product of this entity, a Memorandum shall be issued in order to designate specific officials and personnel who shall comprise the structures at the field levels the initial responsibility of which is to lead in convening the said unit and consolidate all the issues and concerns [PINC] of the CSOs at their respective level and at the same time provide the corresponding necessary responses or referrals at the next subsequent levels.

All the meetings, dialogues, conferences and other efforts involving the CSOs shall be documented and reports submitted to the SMA at the Central Office and proper referrals elevated for further study and evaluation of the SMA National through the SMA Secretariat.

A. Manning Structure

In consideration of the large volume of problems and other issues connected to operational procedures and with the load of cases at DARAB and those ALI in nature still related to operational concerns and the operational guidelines issued, the Sanggunian

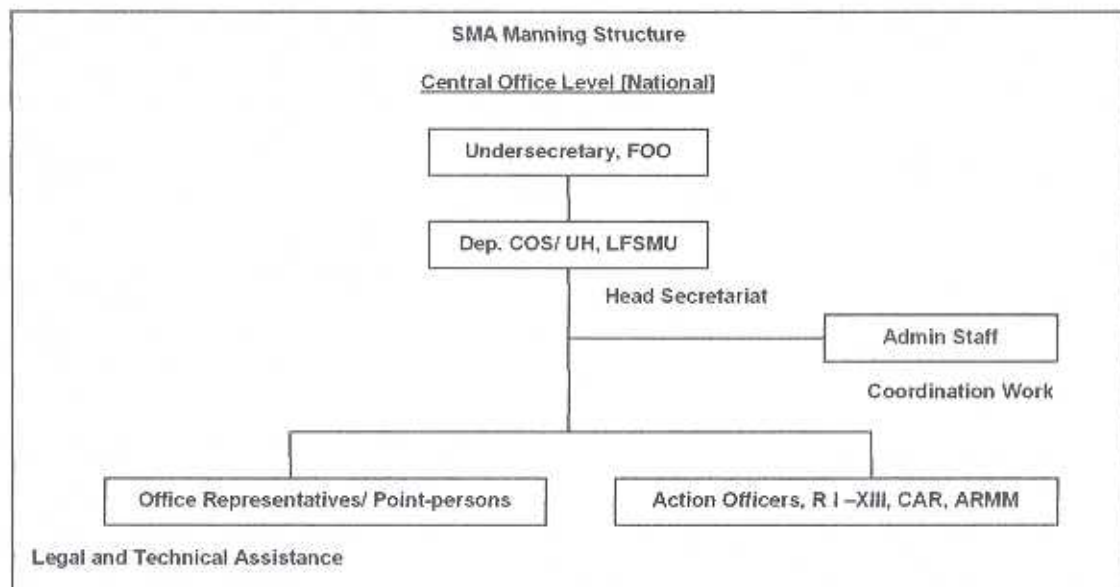
ng mga Magsasakang Agraryo [SMA] at the national level shall be initially lodged at the Office of Undersecretary for Field Operations [FOO].

As the FOO is primarily the unit in charge of the operation of the SMA-National and as the Head Secretariat of this entity, this SMA Secretariat shall have a workforce composed of personnel coming from the Legal and Field Support Monitoring Unit [LFSMU] which in turn shall be assisted by the administrative staff of the office of the Undersecretary for Field Operations.

The said unit shall schedule their manning of the SMA per Action Officer and on the basis of regional assignments and taking into account the nature of the PINCs submitted for resolution and with full consideration on the effective and functional rotation scheme in making up for the day-to-day operation of the SMA.

Support staff coming from the different units/ offices at the DAR Central Office shall also be involved and invited, also on rotation basis with the exception of the permanently assigned staff from the Special Concerns Staff [SCS] who shall render services on a full-time basis as further complemented by a series of rotating personnel coming from their office considering that ultimately, the SMA shall subsequently be handled by the Office of the Secretary through the Special Concerns Staff [SCS].

All those involved and included in the Special Order that shall be issued regarding the manning structure for the SMA shall always be on an on-call basis considering the multi-diversity of the problems or issues being raised during the consultations/ dialogues being conducted at the SMA.



B. Documentation Procedures

The FOO originally, as the Head Secretariat for the SMA at the national level shall be on top of the documentation of PINCs and in effect, the proceedings of the dialogues, consultations, meetings and/ or conferences shall be recorded and subsequent to this, a report or minutes shall be regularly prepared.

The documentation of specific PINCs should state the pertinent data of particular landholdings, the nature of the case, docket numbers and/ or highlights/ narration of simple facts and figures and the process of updating shall depend on the actual developments reported/ case resolution/ reflection of action documents made and the efforts exerted by the persons involved at the field or in the different units/ offices at DARCO or from those reports outside of DAR inclusive of attachments.

Point-persons with specific assignments shall provide regular updates on cases under his or her jurisdiction every Tuesday and different task forces created shall also be enjoined to provide updates on cases lodged at the SMA

At the start, records-keeping and the filing system shall be the responsibility of the Head Secretariat and all aspects of coordination shall be the regular function of the composite members of the said Secretariat but eventually these functions shall be transferred to the OSEC through the SCS at the time when the dialogue mechanism through the SMA has become regularly functional and effective.

C. Feedback Mechanism and the Consultation Scheme

An effective feedback mechanism shall be installed at the field levels, from the SMA Central Office down to the regional, provincial and municipal levels and vice-versa and the interfacing of this communication relay shall be sourced out from the utility of communication devices such as telephone and internet and if necessary, actual field visits that shall be conducted.

The national consultation shall be scheduled every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month and prior to the actual conduct, all updates on specific PINCs should be readied and circulated among SMA point-persons.

SCHEDULE MATRIX FOR SMA DIALOGUE				
LEVEL	SCHEDULE OF CONDUCT	HIGHLIGHTS/ MINUTES/ MATRIX	ACTION DOCUMENTS	COMPLIANCE REPORTS/ UPDATES MATRIX
Central Office	• 2 nd Thursday	• 5 days after	• Immediately	• 15 days after upon receipt of Memorandum
	• 4 th Thursday	• 5 days after	• Immediately	• 15 days after upon receipt of Memorandum
Regional Office	• 1 st Thursday	• 3 days after	• Immediately	• 10 days after upon receipt of Memorandum
Provincial Office	• 3 rd Thursday	• 2 days after	• Immediately	• 7 days after upon receipt of Memorandum
Municipal Office	• 1 st Monday	• 1 day after	• Immediately	• Immediately

Note: The SMA Central Office through the Secretariat shall be furnished copies of the Highlights/ Minutes/ Matrix, the Action Documents and Compliance Reports/ Updates Matrix by the field level SMAs for purposes of consolidation as well as to act as the references of action.

Concerned national leaders and/ or representatives of POs/ NGOs should notify the SMA-National of their request for consultation/ dialogue at least two [2] weeks before the schedule, including the submission of the list of issues and concerns to be taken up for discussion.

Only issues concerning and/ or involving the efforts and decision-making capacity of DARCO officials/ personnel shall be discussed during the Central Office consultation/ dialogue, purposely, to strengthen PO/ NGO engagements at the field level.

It follows that issues which are lodged at the regional, provincial or municipal levels requiring their respective action should be addressed by the proper or concerned officials/ personnel otherwise the said listing of PINCs will have to be referred to the appropriate level for immediate action or resolution.

Listings of PINCs shall be reconciled and available records regarding the status of PO/ NGO cases pending at DARCO and field offices shall be retrieved and it is the responsibility of respective SMA Central Office, regional, provincial and municipal heads to coordinate whatever concerns require pressing action or needs that should be addressed prior to the conduct of the dialogue.

Forms for filling up and/ or updating/ monitoring of cases, other matricial presentations and reporting system shall be re-formatted to fit in with the ones being regularly used at FOO such as the Operational Directives Forms 1 – 4, Case Briefs, Case Updating Matrix, Minutes of the Dialogue and PINCs Listing/ Database.

Regular meetings solely attended by members of the Secretariat shall be scheduled every First Monday of the month and agreements and respective assignments shall be duly prepared and finalized before any consultation/ dialogue will be conducted.

Whatever agreements had and specific assignments submitted by respective office representatives and Action Officers shall be first subjected to a pre-dialogue meeting a day before the actual conduct of the activity to simply test the accuracy of data, the appropriateness of documents retrieved and the availability of invited officials, personnel and important guests.

D. Logistics

All office equipment and supplies for utilization during the consultation/ dialogues at the SMA and for the upkeep of records and other documents including the requirement of computer units shall be the responsibility of the FOO through the SMA Head Secretariat.

E. Funding

A separate fund shall be made available to cover all expenses that will be incurred during the conduct of the scheduled consultation/ dialogue which actual costs shall be regularly chargeable to ~~FOO~~ funds.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.


NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN



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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

THRU : **ATTY. JIM G. COLETO**
Head Executive Assistant

FROM : **THE UNDERSECRETARY**
Field Operations Office

DATE : 12 July 2007

SUBJECT : Operationalization of Sanggunian ng mga Magsasakang
Agraryo
(SMA)

This pertains to the draft Memorandum Circular on the "Mechanism of Operation to Set Up an Effective and Functional Consultation Scheme through the Sanggunian ng mga Magsasakang Agraryo (SMS)" which was returned to this office due to funding constraints.

We take note of the reason for non-approval of the same however, considering that this is an additional function to our office which is not included in our Work and Financial Plan for the year, we respectfully request that additional funds be given to FOO for its smooth and effective operationalization.


NARCISO B. NIETO