




Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT of AGRARIAN REFORM**

 Department of Agrarian Reform  
Office of the Secretary



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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

NO. 07

Series of 2003

**SUBJECT :** Establishment of the Bahay Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka

**I. Prefatory Statement**

Special Order No. 139, series of 2003, provided for the establishment of the Bahay Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka, in line with the commitment of the Department to give priority to CARP farmer-beneficiaries. This Memorandum Circular further prescribes the structure, organization and functions of the Bahay Ugnayan.

**II. Rationale**

CARP implementation has now come to deal with the more contentious private agricultural lands where resistance against reform is more profound on both legal and extra-legal fronts. These have and will continue to bring forth issues, controversies, policy and legal questions that DAR has to face and address with relative dispatch in addition to those that have long been pending in what is already considered as its clogged dockets. Under this environment, individual follow ups, pickets, mass protests and other types of farmers mobilization has considerably increased, demanding timely response and definitive action on crucial issues and concerns confronting agrarian reform.

The DAR has to be prepared and organizationally equipped to effectively and efficiently respond to this critical junction in agrarian reform implementation.

Thus, it is imperative for the DAR to institutionalize a mechanism that could physically and functionally, provide civil society in general and farmer stakeholders in particular with relevant information and necessary assistance, or simply provide appropriate advice on agrarian reform issues. In like manner, it shall serve as a forum where agrarian stakeholders can effectively ventilate immediate and pressing concerns

on CARP implementation. It would facilitate prompt access to information by farmer stakeholders on the status of pending cases. It shall also serve as the farmers' liaison with the DAR and the Department's link with concerned civil society actors who are our vital partners in CARP implementation.

### III. Mandate

It is the declared policy of the State to:

- a. *"x x x recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers and landowners, as well as cooperatives and other independent farmers' organizations, to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the program. . ." (1987 Constitution, Art. XIII, Sec. 5; RA 6657, Chap 1, Sec. 2[4]).*
- b. *"x x x protect the autonomy and independence of institutions of farmers and farmworkers that will safeguard their interests and ensure their dignified existence free from pernicious restraints and practices" (EO 129-A Sec. 3[e]).*

Pursuant to these policies, the DAR is mandated to:

- a. *"Institutionalize the participation of farmers, farmworkers, other beneficiaries, and agrarian reform advocates in agrarian reform policy formulation, program implementation, and evaluation" (EO 129-A Sec 5[k]).*
- b. *"Provide free legal assistance to farmers covered by agrarian reform and expedite the resolution of agrarian conflicts and land tenure problems either through conciliatory or adversary proceedings" (EO 292, Book IV, Title XI, Chap 1, Sec 3[6]).*
- c. *"Provide creative, responsive and effective information, education and communication programs and projects both for the tenant beneficiaries, landowners, the government and private sectors and the general public, thereby generating a broad spectrum of support and understanding of the new agrarian reform program "(E.O. 292, Book IV, Title XI, Chap 1, Sec. [7]).*

The Secretary is likewise mandated to, among others, "promulgate administrative issuances necessary for the efficient administration of the offices under the Secretary and for proper execution of the laws relative thereto x x x" (E.O. 292, Book IV, Chap. 2 Sec. 7[4]).

#### IV. The Bahay Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka

The Bahay Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka, or Bahay Ugnayan, for brevity, is envisioned to serve as a one-stop-shop for our farmer stakeholders where personnel from the different key DARCO offices will make available to them the necessary information and assistance. The Bahay Ugnayan shall thus provide easier access to information and assistance for the farmers and in the process, be able to determine bottlenecks in the case disposition/issue resolution for appropriate action by the offices concerned. The Bahay Ugnayan shall formalize and ensure coordinative procedures among and between DARCO offices, and whenever necessary, the field offices, for timely and appropriate action on farmers' issues and concerns.

It shall also serve as a coordinative mechanism for peasant sector activities, including civil society networking and linkaging on a more pro-active level, that is, by initiating such activities even ahead of requests from the civil society stakeholder.

##### A. Objectives

The Bahay Ugnayan aims to:

1. Provide easier, faster and more convenient access to assistance and information to farmer-beneficiaries of the CARP;
2. Serve as a coordinative mechanism among and between the DAR central offices pertaining to critical cases, issues and concerns being lobbied by the farmer stakeholders and civil society groups, towards a more pro-active, realistic, and informed decision-making;
3. Spearhead, coordinate and serve as the permanent venue for, farmers' fora, dialogues, symposia, consultation, meetings and conferences;
4. Liaise with the National Anti-Poverty Commission particularly with the Farmers' Sector Council thereof; and
5. Serve as a coordinative center for all Peasant Sector activities to include information dissemination, communication, linkage building/networking, and legal assistance among others.

## B. Structure and Organization

The Bahay Ugnayan shall be supervised by a Bahay Ugnayan Coordinating Committee (BUCC) composed of the Secretary as Chairman and the following:

Vice-Chairman - Undersecretary, Field Operations Office

Members - Undersecretary, PPLAO  
Undersecretary, FMAO  
Undersecretary, SSO  
Assistant Secretaries, DARAB  
Director, BALA  
Director, BLAD  
Director, SCS  
Director, PDMS  
Director, Litigation Office  
Director, BARBD  
Director, BARIE  
Director, DARAB Secretariat

*(Ex-Officio Member)* - Director, Bahay Ugnayan Secretariat

The BUCC shall be assisted by a Secretariat, which shall be directly under the Office of the Secretary, and composed of the Bahay Ugnayan Executive Director as Chairman and the following:

Action Officers (6)

Legal Officers (2)

An administrative and support staff shall assist the Secretariat in coordinating the activities of the Bahay-Ugnayan.

The members of the BUCC shall likewise designate their permanent Ugnayan officers to ensure regular and effective action and/or monitoring of the issues and concerns brought before the Bahay Ugnayan.

## C. Duties and Responsibilities

The BUCC shall formulate and/or implement the policies, rules and regulations necessary to achieve the objectives of the Bahay Ugnayan, and may authorize any of its members to formulate such rules and regulations necessary therein. These shall include the following:

1. Formulate and implement rules and regulations necessary to address program implementation bottlenecks particularly with regards to case disposition and issue resolution;
2. Determine and decide priorities, if necessary, in case disposition/issue resolution, particularly those that may be critical to CARP implementation in the areas of concern of the farmer stakeholders;
3. Direct and/or coordinate the activities of the DAR central offices, or if necessary, the concerned field offices, to fast track action on farmers issues and concerns;
4. Undertake pro-active coordination with other CARP implementing agencies and other government offices, whenever necessary; and
5. Perform such other functions as may be necessary.

The BUCC shall meet at least once a month, or as the need arises, to ensure that the above tasks are effectively and efficiently performed.

The Secretariat shall assist the BUCC in the performance of the above-mentioned tasks, through the following:

1. Facilitate and conduct farmers and civil society stakeholders dialogues, fora, seminars, information and education campaigns and such other activities as may be necessary to provide the specific DAR publics with access to relevant information and assistance;
2. Coordinate with the concerned DARCO units and other offices for the timely and immediate action on farmers' issues and concerns and provide the necessary technical, program or policy input to the BUCC relative thereto;
3. Initiate and implement a plan of action towards the strengthening and operationalization of civil society participation in CARP implementation;
4. Direct, manage and supervise the daily operations of the Bahay Ugnayan and its offices; and

5. Perform such other tasks as may be necessary and directed by the BUCC.

#### D. Process Flow

The operations of the Bahay Ugnayan shall be guided by the following process flow:

1. Requests, queries, follow-ups and the like made or submitted by farmers/ARBs or civil society groups on issues and concerns such as but not limited to, pending ALI and DARAB cases, shall be referred to the Bahay Ugnayan for appropriate action. These requests may be made either by walk-in clients or through written correspondence.

Similar requests made through the Office of the Secretary shall likewise be referred to the Bahay Ugnayan.

Requests for dialogues, consultation, meetings and the like, concerning farmers' issues and concerns shall likewise be referred to the Bahay Ugnayan for appropriate action.

2. Requests or matters that need to be acted upon by the Secretary or the other BUCC members shall immediately be forwarded to the official concerned, with Completed Staff Work (CSW) and recommended actions thereon. Otherwise, the Secretariat is authorized and shall endeavor to provide immediate, definitive and decisive response to the farmers at their level. In all cases, the parties concerned shall be appropriately advised on such action taken.
3. Upon effectivity of this Memorandum Circular, the following offices shall submit to the Secretary through the Bahay Ugnayan Secretariat, within 15 days, an inventory of pending cases including the dates the same were received by the said offices, and the action/s taken thereon:
  - a. DARAB
  - b. BALA
  - c. Litigation Office
  - d. CLUPPIs I and II

- e. OSEC
- f. Office of the Usecs, PPLAO and Field Operations
- g. Office of the Asec, PPLAO
- h. Legal Division

Henceforth, the Secretariat shall ensure that the above information is regularly updated, to facilitate speedy response to queries by farmers groups on such concerns.

V. EFFECTIVITY

This Memorandum Circular takes effect immediately and supplements Special Order No. 139, Series of 2003 on the same subject matter. All other issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or revoked accordingly.

23 May 2003, Diliman, Quezon City.

  
ROBERTO M. PAGDANGANAN  
Secretary