



Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT of AGRARIAN REFORM**  
ELLIPTICAL ROAD, DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY • TELS. 928-7031 TO 39

Memorandum Circular No. 08  
Series of 1997

**SUBJECT: THE SUPPORT SERVICES OFFICE (SSO)  
IMPERATIVES FOR 1997-1998**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

For the past three years, the Department of Agrarian Reform has declared and launched Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs) as a major strategy of the department. These are where the Department's resources are harnessed and its efforts are focused to provide the necessary support services to the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries. These services are aimed at improving the productivity and income level of the beneficiaries, which would in turn guarantee the irreversible gains of the program. This is directed towards a more rationalized and concrete direction for the ARCs, doable within the next eighteen months.

**The Key Result Areas for ARCs:**

1. Immediate Results
  - a. No. of Hectares Distributed/ No. of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs)
  - b. Number of ARBs who are members of Peoples' Organizations/ Cooperatives
  - c. Number of POs/ Coops Formed and Operationalized
  - d. Number of Organizations with continuing Credit and Market Access
  - e. Number of viable projects and/or services of the organization
  - f. Amount of Capital Build-Up (CBU) of ARB Organization
  - g. Number of ARCs with Basic Physical Infrastructure Facilities viz., Irrigation, Post-harvest Facility and Farm to Market Roads
  - h. Number of ARCs with Development Plans.
2. Economic Impact
  - a. Increased Income and Productivity vis-à-vis number of Beneficiaries assisted per ARC
  - b. Substantial decrease of ARB dependence on traditional sources of loans/credit.
  - c. Reduction in Poverty Incidence
3. Social Impact
  - a. Increased Social Infrastructure through formation of viable ARB organizations and subsequent emergence of new leaders, or pool of leaders.
  - b. Access to basic social services such as health, education, housing, potable water, rural electrification and others.



*"Tulong-tulong sa pagsulong"*



## II. PRIORITY FOCUS

As of September 1996, there are a total of 863 ARCs nationwide. The SSO shall focus and direct its resources on ARCs based on the level of LAD accomplishments. The following will be the order of priorities:

1. Priority One- 100% LAD Accomplishment (245 ARCs nationwide)
2. Priority Two- 76% to 99% LAD Accomplishment (198 ARCs nationwide)
3. Priority Three- 51% to 75% LAD Accomplishment (135 ARCs nationwide)
4. Priority Four- 0% to 50% LAD Accomplishment (212 ARCs nationwide)

Priorities One and Two have more chances of success given its present LTI status and which would undoubtedly prove that the ARC strategy of DAR is feasible. It is, therefore, in these two prioritized areas that the SSO shall marshal substantial portion of its resources to insure that the basic support services such as credit, market linkages, irrigation and post-harvest facilities, and farm to market roads are in place. Relatedly, ARCs which are under the SRA convergence area should gain access and mobilize the resources of the LGUs and other line agencies, so that DAR's limited funds could be used on the identified and prioritized areas. These same areas are where ODA could be directed too.

## III. PROGRAMS and COMPONENTS

### 1. Organization Building/ Strengthening (OBAS).

The component involves the provision of training to existing organizations in the ARCs to assure their viability as cooperatives. Relevant training courses on Systems Development; Financial and Organizational Management shall be provided to these organization. Organizing and forming new cooperatives in these ARCs shall also be undertaken if existing cooperatives/organizations cannot absorb other ARBs as members. This will insure that all the ARBs are provided basic services. In addition, formation and strengthening of Cooperative Federations within ARCs shall be initiated leading to a federation of ARC-network of cooperatives at the provincial level.

Development of schemes/ strategies to aid these organizations in substantially increasing their CBU shall be undertaken. This would allow them to engage in micro-enterprises or social enterprises in order to raise their capacity above subsistence level.

### 2. Economic Programs.

The SSO has already established the following programs:

- a. Credit - (CAP-PBD; 5-20-75; TLC; NLSE, FAPs)
- b. Market Linkaging (IMAP)
- c. Post Harvest Facilities (Quedan)
- d. Technology Training (IPM, Shell Integrated Farming, and others)



### **3. Physical Infrastructure.**

This involves the provision of irrigation and post-harvest facilities and farm to market roads which the SSO has accessed through the ARF and Foreign donors such as World Bank, EU, OECF, Belgian Government and others.

### **4. Basic Services**

The component includes services such as health, education, housing, provision of potable water and electrification for ARCs through the convergence areas of SRA. Resources should be aggressively tapped from the other Line Agencies and Local Government Units.

## **V. ROLE of the SUPPORT SERVICES OFFICES**

In operationalizing the abovementioned components, the roles and responsibilities of the SSO Units are now clearly redefined and these should be carried out without further delay. These are defined below:

### CENTRAL OFFICE

#### **1. Office Of the Assistant Secretary for Support Services**

The office shall be responsible for the over-all planning, monitoring and evaluation of critical milestone achievements for the ARCs. It shall provide clear directives, focus and priorities, systems and procedures. It shall further provide over-all management, integration and complementation of the functions of the SSO units at the Central and field levels.

#### **2. Staff Bureaus under the SSO**

##### **Bureau of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development**

BARBD shall be responsible for the formulation of policies and guidelines to further enhance ARC development. As a staff bureau, it shall provide support and direction to the regional and provincial units under SSO in the areas of OBAS, provision of ARB training, social entrepreneurship and enterprise development interventions and assessment of levels of ARCs, following a clear, workable and practical ARC Development Framework. It shall monitor ARC development through different but consistent tools in managing ARCs, systems and procedures, and responsive training packages. The organizations at the ARC level shall be the main focus of support assistance of BARBD.

##### **Project Development and Management Services**

PDMS shall be responsible for the conceptualization, development, and management of PBD and LTI-related projects both locally and foreign funded. The PDMS shall serve as the clearing house for all ODA projects of the Department.

### The MAROs/DFs in the ARCs.

The Development Facilitators are the footsoldiers of the Department in the ARCs. Likewise, the MAROs play a critical role in ensuring that goals are reached and services for the ARCs are delivered through the DFs. Their supervisory role in guiding the DFs along the set objectives are therefore crucial since the DFs shall be handling the over-all development of the ARC.

## **VI. ENLISTING the SUPPORT of OTHER UNITS**

### 1. Management Information Service (MIS)

The lack of Data-based system has been identified as one of the bottlenecks in the smooth implementation of SSO programs. The need to fast track the installation of DAR's data base is deemed imperative. This should be installed the soonest possible time, and should be the Department's priority for 1997. The MIS should therefore prioritize this activity.

### 2. Policy Strategic and Research Service (PSRS)

Assistance in the formulation of SSO policies, such as AVA/BOT shall be continuously requested by the SSO concerned unit.

### 3. Planning Service

A more coordinated effort in the formulation of plans relative to SSO objectives and programs from the central down to the field offices is needed. These could be initiated by the Planning Service.

### 4. Financial Management and Administrative Office (FMAO).

FMAO should ensure that the budget and funds of SSO units at the Regional and Provincial levels are properly utilized. Check and balance and control of these funds should be installed to ensure that it is used for its programmed utilization. Finance is an important lifeblood of SSO.

### 5. Bureau of Agrarian Reform Information and Education (BARIE)

BARIE should lend assistance in the provision of training that would retool and upgrade skills and knowledge and reformation of values of the SSO staff ( from Central down the line to the DFs) so that they could better address the needs of the ARCs.



PDMS shall likewise provide support to regional and provincial units under the SSO in the areas of Physical and other Allied Infrastructure Support. This clearly defines their resource mobilization agenda for both local and foreign sources.

*Convergence* of BARBD and PDMS functions are along the line of:

a. *Economic Program.*

PDMS shall undertake initiatives in the provision of farm-production inputs and post-harvest facilities, through the extension of credit under the 5-20-75 DAR-LBP Partnership Program, DAR-QUEDANCOR Program for Barangay Marketing Centers, and other credit components under foreign-assisted projects ( such as under OECF and the WB projects). BARBD shall take the initiative in the area of technological training, in the management of some credit program such as the CAP-PBD, NLSF, and the TLRC, and in the area of investment and marketing assistance.

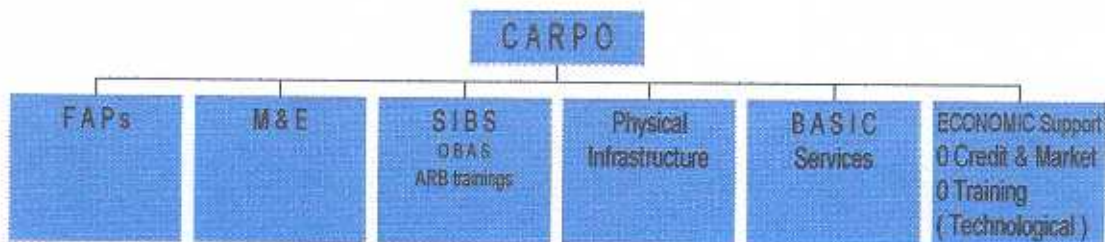
B. *Basic Services.*

PDMS shall conceptualize and package proposals for the provision of these basic services for the prioritized ARCs. BARBD shall then operationalize these at the field level through the attached SSO units at Regional and Provincial levels.

REGIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

The Assistant Regional Director for Operations (ARDO) shall take on full responsibility for the PBD programs of the region.

The BARBD and PDMS shall relate its function to this Regional Unit. There is a need therefore to consider reorganizing and strengthening the SSD into functional sub-units. Additional staff should be added to the SSD, if it so warrants, for the unit to respond to the ARC Program. The functional structure should follow along this line, with the CARPO SSD as the Unit Head.



PROVINCIAL BENEFICIARIES DEVELOPMENT and COORDINATION DIVISION.

The PARSSO, with the full-time assistance of the CARPO-BDCD shall orchestrate PBD activities in the province.

Following the SSD restructuring, a parallel functional structure and staffing of the BDCD should be realigned along that line. Additional staff should also be augmented, if necessary.

*ARDO*

#### 6. Field Operations Group

FOG needs to intensify their LAD activities and direct its resources to complete LTI in the ARCs to be consistent with the SSO strategy, thus complementing the efforts of the SSO in these areas.

#### 7. DARROs/DARPOs

RDs and PAROs should vigorously implement the 1997-1998 SSO imperatives. They are also enjoined to ensure that DFs shall work full-time in the ARCs and to provide the necessary logistic support to the DFs in the form of agreed rates of TEVs and given on time.

### VII. ROLES of LGUs and NGOs.

The LGUs play a crucial role in the success of ARCs since the beneficiaries are their local constituents, too. They are an integral factor to ensure the success of the ARCs as a strategy for rural development. DAR should therefore work hand in hand with the LGUs, given the resources that the LGUs could provide the ARCs. Proper coordination is therefore a must, most especially if the ARCs are under declared SRA convergence areas.

The NGOs are our accepted partners in ARC development. They play an important role in organizing, advocacy, resource mobilization and other expertise in our ARC development. We should continue to support them and bring them to our agenda on ARC Development.

The FSD and PETS/PARCIPS tool espoused by the FAO/TSARRD and NGOs should be carried out and captured to the advantage of the ARCs.

This Memorandum Circular takes effect immediately and supersedes any issuances inconsistent herewith.

Done this 18<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1997.



**HECTOR D. SOLIMAN** *gm*  
Undersecretary for Field Operations  
and Support Services