

Executive Order No. 366

Directing a Strategic Review of the Operations and Organizations of the Executive Branch and Providing Options and Incentives for Government Employees who may be Affected by the Rationalization of the Functions and Agencies of the Executive Branch

October 4, 2004

The EO stated that all Department Secretaries were directed to take the lead in the conduct of a 'strategic review of the operations and organization of all component units, including agencies attached to or under the administrative supervision, of their respective Departments for purposes of:

- a. Focusing government efforts and resources on its vital/core services; and
- b. Improving the quality and efficiency of government services delivery by eliminating/minimizing overlaps and duplication, and improving agency performance through the rationalization of service delivery and support systems, and organization structure and staffing.

Salient Extension Provisions

Section 4. Preparation of a Rationalization Plan. The Department Secretary shall prepare a Rationalization Plan for the whole Department, including the agencies and government-owned and/or controlled corporations (GOCCs) attached to or under its administrative supervision. The Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the strategic plan of the Department and shall contain the disposition of its functions, programs, projects, activities, organizational units, agencies, staffing, and personnel. Such plan shall indicate the following information:

- (a) The core functions, programs, activities and services of the Department and its units/agencies;
 - (b) The specific shift in policy directions, functions, programs, projects, activities, and strategies, indicating the phasing of the intended shifts;
 - (c) The functions, programs, and projects which would be scaled down, phased out or abolished such as:
 - Those that duplicate or unnecessarily overlap with other programs, activities, and projects within the Department and its attached agencies and with other government entities;
 - Those that are not producing the desired outcomes, no longer achieving the objectives and purposes for which they were originally designed and implemented, and/or not cost-efficient and do not generate the level of physical and economic returns vis-à-vis the resource inputs,
 - Those that are redundant/outdated or no longer relevant to the accomplishment of the major final outputs of the department/agency;
 - Those that directly compete with those of the private sector that can be done more efficiently and effectively by said sector; and
 - Those which have been devolved to local government units.
 - (d) The functions, programs, and projects where more resources would be channeled such as:
 - Those that directly support core/frontline services;
 - Those that are directly involved in the social, economic and political empowerment of the people, or those that promote private sector initiative;
 - Those that contribute to the creation of livelihood or employment opportunities, and an environment conducive to investment and entrepreneurship, and productivity; and
 - Those that directly contribute to the ultimate societal outcome objectives of the National Government and/or the intermediate/sector/sub-sector/organizational outcome objectives of the agency.
 - (e) The resulting structural and organizational shift, stating the specific changes in the units/agencies of the Department;
 - (f) The staffing unit, highlighting the changes to be made in the staffing pattern and personnel of the Department and its agencies, as well as the organizational strengthening strategies that need to be implemented.
 - (g) The resource allocation shift, specifying the effects of the streamlined setup on the budgetary allocations of the Department and its agencies; and
 - (h) The internal and external communication plan, indicating the specific methods and strategies employed/being undertaken in conveying the rationalization process to the personnel who may be affected and to other stakeholders.
- Attachment A to C indicates the highlights of the Plan, the evaluation/findings of this Department, as well as the approved organization structure and staffing pattern (SP).

II. Highlights of the ATI Rationalization Plan (RP)

13. Proposed Strategic and Functional Shifts

The ATI envisions being the leader of excellence in agricultural technology dissemination and knowledge management through a more proactive and responsive extension service.

Likewise, the ATI takes on the mission to orchestrate all agricultural and fishery extension delivery systems in both the public and private sector to ensure unified management in the empowerment of farmers and fisherfolk to become more progressive and globally competitive.

In order to attain said vision and mission, it will pursue the following strategic shifts:

- To be the led coordinating agency for information, extension and communication (IEC) in the DA to orchestrate all IEC programs and activities across DA agencies, bureaus, corporations and regional field offices (RFOs);
- From a private goods-oriented public extension service delivery, the ATI will lead and coordinate with the DA Central Office (CO) the delivery of national public goods while the RFOs will produce and deliver regional public goods; and
- From duplicative functions to clearly defined roles of DA extension providers, to give way to more effective complementation of activities.

Likewise, The ATI intends to pursue the following functional shifts:

- Strengthening of its core competencies on:
 - o Extension policy development and standards-setting;
 - o Strategic Extension systems planning, monitoring and evaluation; and
 - o Formulation of an extension agenda and programs for the national and regional levels.

III. Findings and Evaluation

17.1 Per the AFMA, extension services refer to the "provision of training, information, and support services by the government and non-government organizations to the agricultural and fisheries sectors to improve the technical, business and social capabilities of Farmers and Fisherfolk".

Since the provision of such extension services to the farmers and fisherfolk have been devolved to the LGUs, Section 92 of the AFMA stated that the DA. Together with state colleges and universities, shall assist in the LGUs' extension system by improving their effectiveness and efficiency.

Furthermore, the AFMA directed the formulation of a National Extension System for Agriculture and Fisheries (NESAF) Composed of three (3) subsystems, i.e., National Government (NG), LGU, and private sector.

As identified by the AFMA, LGUs shall be responsible for delivering direct agriculture and fisheries extension services.

The private sector such as farmers and fisherfolk's cooperatives and associations are encouraged to participate and provide training and other complementary extension services, especially in community organizing, use of participatory approaches, popularization of training materials, regenerative agricultural technologies, agribusiness, and management skills.

The NG, through the DA together with SUCs, shall assist in the LGUs' extension system by improving their effectiveness and efficiency through capability-building and complementary extension activities. Complementary extension services include: (a) technical assistance; (b) training of LGU extension personnel; (c) improvement of physical facilities; (d) extension cum research; and (e) information support services.

The strengthening of core competencies on (a) extension policy development and standards-setting; (b) strategic extension systems planning, monitoring and evaluation; and (c) formulation of an extension agenda and programs for the national and regional levels will support new modalities in the formulation, delivery, management, monitoring and evaluation of extension services.

Specifically, DA AO No. 6 dated 10 July 1998, known as the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 8435 (AFMA IRR), identified the DA RFOs and ATI to undertake the Department's extension functions.

Thus, the ATI's intention to strengthen its core competencies, particularly on extension policy development and standards-setting, strategic extension systems planning, monitoring and evaluation,

and formulation of an extension agenda and programs for the national and regional levels will be supportive of the enunciated State policy in the AFMA to support the development of a national extension system that will help accelerate the transformation of Philippine agriculture and fisheries from a resource-based to a technology-based industry.

Moreover, the same is consistent with its mandated function to lead in the formulation of the national agricultural and fisheries extension (AFE) agenda, as well as the formulation of guidelines in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating AFE programs.

17.2 Section 88 of the AFMA states that "there shall be a national merit and promotion system governing all extension personnel, regardless of the source of funding, to promote professionalism and achieve excellence and productivity in the provision of the government extension services."

Pursuant to said provision, the AFMA IRR designated ATI, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Career Executive Service Board (CESB), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the LGUs, to formulate a Harmonized Merit and Output-Oriented Promotion System.

The said promotion system is intended to provide a standard/criteria for evaluating achievements, performances, as well as a demonstration of exceptional job responsibility in earning both monetary and non-monetary incentives.

A draft Joint Circular re Guidelines Implementing the National Merit Awards and Incentives System or Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Personnel prepared by a Technical Working Group, composed of the aforesaid agencies, had considered the DBM's comments in a meeting last October 2012 to eliminate the 'promotion' context which could be earned thru salary step increment.

17.3 The implementation of an integrated and ladderized human capital development approach for public extension services would adopt a phased training scheme for extension workers and other clients.

The phased training scheme would mean progressive courses. In the said scheme, a new trainee would first attend a Basic Course which is designed to orient and engross him/her into the field of extension service. The Basic Course generally includes topics on National Development Framework, Agency Programs and Priorities, Community Development, Communication Skills, Ethics of Public Service and Values Orientation.

After finishing the Basic Course, a trainee can then attend an Advanced Course, which would provide him/her with a level of specialization in certain fields such as Farmer-led Extension, e-Extension, Report Writing, Monitoring and Evaluation, Cooperatives Development, etc., depending on training needs and current/future assignments.

Finally, an AEW assigned to a Commodity Program may participate in a Specialized Course on rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock and poultry, and root crops. Thus, extension workers are provided with options for growth and development as he/she advances in his/her career. Instead of attending the same level of training, an extension worker is provided with an opportunity to attend various levels of training that would develop specific skills and expertise to be more responsive to the needs of the community which he/she serves.

17.4 The adoption of an ICT-based knowledge management system is intended to provide distance learning modalities to connect EW with other stakeholders along a technology-based value extension service chain via e-learning courses, farmers' call centers, and other extension strategies. This will provide new information and communication structure that can respond to concerns with the latest information on technological innovations in their various fields of concern.

DA Department Order No. 03, series of 2007, designates the ATI as the lead agency for the provisions of electronic delivery of extension services (e-Extension), in collaboration with various agencies, bureaus and organizational units of the DA. This is to integrate and harmonize an ICT-based extension delivery system for agriculture and fisheries.

The e-Extension is a network of institutions that provides a more efficient alternative to a traditional extension system for the agriculture, fisheries and natural resources sectors. It maximizes the use of information and communications technology to attain a modernized agriculture and fisheries sector.

It focuses on creating an electronic and interactive bridge where farmers, fisheries and other stakeholders meet and transact to enhance productivity, profitability and global competitiveness.

17.5 Strengthening partnerships with the LGUs, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders could enable the ATI to determine the needs of the farmers and fisherfolk in order to equip extension workers with relevant knowledge and skills to address said concerns towards an enhanced and responsive service delivery.

As directed under the AFMA and its IRR, the DA through the ATI shall encourage private sector participation. Towards this end is an institutional grant system for social equity interventions. An accreditation system for private extension services providers (ESP) has been established to provide opportunities for wider participation of the private sector in the conduct of agricultural extension services, to recognize efforts and capabilities of private institutions/service providers, and to provide a variety of training programs/extension activities for farmers and fisherfolk in support of the agriculture and fisheries modernization program (DA AO 22, s. 2008)

Accredited ESPs would be eligible to receive grants, as well as financial and technical assistance, depending on their project proposals. The same would allow for a wider reach of farmers and fisherfolk benefiting the extension program.

The DA's Co-Financing Agreements with the LGUs intend to complement resources where there are under-investments or under-provision of budget by the LGUs for agriculture and fisheries extension projects and to augment the resources coming from the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) and local revenues for the efficient implementation of extension projects and activities. This is consistent with the AFMA and would support the efforts of the LGUs towards improved delivery of extension services, as well as a sustainable human and social development anchored on poverty alleviation (DA AO 11, s. 2010).

17.6 Curriculum development is inclusive of the preparation of designs and blueprints of training activities out of the training needs survey and analysis. Innovation in curriculum development involves improvements in traditional or conventional protocols and modalities in extension delivery. It also involves developing strategies to ensure maximum learning, amplified retention among adult learners, and increased participation. Through innovative extension modalities, it is expected that extension workers would be more effective in delivering extension services to farmers and fisherfolk, especially on the spread of technologies relevant to their field.

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