

**EXECUTIVE ORDER
NO. 255**

**ADDRESSING RURAL POVERTY IN THE PHILIPPINES
THROUGH THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

WHEREAS, rural poverty in the Philippines continues to rise despite government efforts to alleviate poverty;

WHEREAS, the El Niño and other climate-related occurrences created more adverse impact on the poorest sectors of society than the Asian financial crisis;

WHEREAS, the farmers and fisherfolk sectors are among the poorest sectors in Philippine society faced with a bleak future due to the degradation of their surrounding environment;

WHEREAS, appropriate support services must be delivered to the poor at the community level to arrest rising rural poverty and increasing natural resource depletion;

WHEREAS, the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) is mandated by law, R.A. 8425, to monitor the implementation of the government's poverty eradication program, particularly those concerned with enhancing the capability of the poor to uplift their own conditions through better management of natural resources;

WHEREAS, the NAPC is specifically mandated to provide financial and non-financial incentives to local government units with counterpart resources for the implementation of social reform and poverty alleviation programs [sec. 7(7), R.A. 8425];

WHEREAS, the NAPC advocates for and promotes tripartite efforts of the government, civil society and business towards poverty eradication, especially through local governance;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby declare the establishment of a network of community-based enterprises to address rural poverty through the conservation, protection and development of natural resources.

SECTION 1. Network. — The NAPC shall lay the groundwork for the establishment of a network of local government units with community-based enterprises implementing sustainable resource management projects at the barangay level, through the provision of a standard set of services for coastal and upland communities.

SECTION 2. Local Development Plans. — The participating local government units (LGUs) shall submit local development plans using the sustainable integrated area development (SIAD) framework for the localization of Philippine Agenda 21, in accordance with Memorandum Order No. 47, s. 1999, with a resolution for counterpart funding. These development plans shall incorporate a monitoring system for poverty indicators in accordance with the NAPC monitoring system.

SECTION 3. Poorest Families. — A minimum of one hundred poorest families in each participating barangay shall be identified as local cooperators for the community-based enterprises forming part of the Network. Identification shall be based on the Minimum Basic Needs (MBN) approach to be conducted by the Dept. of the Interior and Local Governments (DILG). Their minimum basic needs of survival, security and enabling services shall be addressed by the concerned agencies, through the NAPC.

SECTION 4. Support Services. — The NAPC shall coordinate the delivery of support services by concerned agencies consisting of (a) affordable and clean energy, (b) transportation facilities, (c) communication systems, (d) micro-enterprise development and (e) water systems. These support services shall cover the needs of the whole barangay and may be augmented by equipment.

SECTION 5. Technical and Financial Assistance. — The NAPC shall source technical and financial assistance to participating LGUs and community-based enterprises run by non-governmental organizations and peoples organizations. In this regard, the counter valued fund of the non-project grant assistance (NPGA CVF) of the Government of Japan is hereby earmarked for the network, subject to compliance of all donor requirements by the NAPC. Furthermore, the NAPC shall ensure the convergence of donor assistance to the network.

SECTION 6. Network Committee. — Implementation of this order shall be handled by a Network Committee under the NAPC consisting of the following:

Chairman	-	NAPC Vice-Chairperson, Government Sector
Vice-Chairman-		NAPC NGO Sector Representative
Member	-	DILG Representative
Member	-	DENR Representative
Member	-	DA Representative
Member	-	NAPC Farmer Sector Representative
Member	-	NAPC Fisherfolk Sector Representative

SECTION 7. Endowment Fund. — A portion of the NPGA CVF shall be set aside as an endowment fund for the benefit of NGOs and POs implementing community-based enterprises through the conservation, protection and development of natural resources, especially those leading to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. This sum may be added to an existing environmental endowment fund; provided, that the earnings from this contribution shall be administered separately from other funds, subject to such administrative agreements as may be agreed upon when the contribution is effected.

SECTION 8. Repealing and Separability Clause. — This Order modifies, repeals, amends, revokes all previous issuances, orders, circulars inconsistent herewith. Uncontested provisions shall remain valid and binding should some parts herein be declared unconstitutional.

This Order takes effect immediately.

Done in Manila, this 15th day of June, in the Year of Our Lord, Twenty Hundred.

(Sgd.) JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA