

INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM *

Conrado S. Navarro **

Introduction

The Philippine Agrarian Reform Program is one of the longest-running programs of its kind anywhere in the world¹. It is also one of the widest in terms of coverage, affecting more than a quarter of the entire 30 million-hectare land area of the Philippines².

Starting in 1902 with a law that simply set ceilings on land ownership, it has evolved into the present **Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP)** which involves transfer of land ownership from big landowners to their tenant farmers or farmworkers. It is **comprehensive** in that it covers all kinds of agricultural lands, regardless of crops planted (whereas, an earlier land reform decree issued in 1972 covered only rice and corn lands), and also because, aside from transfer of land ownership, it provides **support services** to the program beneficiaries to ensure that they are able to make the lands awarded to them fully productive. These support services include the construction or improvement of small to medium-scale infrastructure in support of agriculture (i.e., farm-to-market roads and bridges covering a few hundred meters, to irrigation facilities serving hundreds of hectares of cropland; grains warehouses and post-production facilities such as rice and corn mills and dryers; etc.), organization of farmers' cooperatives, extension of credit for agricultural inputs, and assistance in the marketing of agricultural produce.

“Comprehensive” also suggests “diversity”: the CARP comprise a diversity of programs, services and activities that are, necessarily, carried out by an equally diverse set of implementing agencies and organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. What these different agencies and organizations are, their respective roles and functions in CARP policy implementation and management, how their services and activities are coordinated so as to effectively complement

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** Former DAR Senior Undersecretary (Vice Minister) in 1998-2001, and currently, Executive Trustee of the Agrarian Justice Foundation, Inc. (AJFI), a private, non-profit organization that extends legal assistance to agrarian reform beneficiaries and DAR personnel facing court suits filed by landowners; and incoming President of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), the country's oldest national non-governmental rural development organization.

one another, and the various arrangements for monitoring and evaluating their respective contributions to the CARP, are the subjects of this paper.

I. POLICY-MAKING AND COORDINATION AT VARIOUS LEVELS

Inasmuch as the CARP is a multi-agency program, it is imperative that policy-making and implementation are properly coordinated at various levels, from the national to the village level. The following describes the various bodies and systems involved in this coordination.

The Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC)

In July 1987, with the Philippines enjoying barely a year of freedom from more than a decade of martial rule, newly-elected President Corazon C. Aquino proclaimed agrarian reform as the “centerpiece program” of the once-again-democratic Philippine Government. Following the adoption of a new Philippine Constitution, she issued Proclamation No. 131, “Instituting an Agrarian Reform Program”, in order to put into effect the constitutional provisions mandating the promotion by the state of “comprehensive rural development and agrarian reform”³.

Proclamation 131 was immediately followed by the President’s Executive Order (EO) No. 229, “Providing the Mechanisms for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program”. This Executive Order provided the policies and general procedures for land acquisition and distribution, compensation of landowners, payment by beneficiaries, and credit support to the new owner-cultivators of transferred lands. It also created the **Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC)**,

The PARC is the highest policy-making and coordinative body of the CARP. Under EO 229, it is mandated to “formulate and/or implement the policies, rules and regulations necessary to implement each component of the CARP and (to) authorize any of its members to formulate rules and regulations concerning aspects of agrarian reform falling within their area of responsibility”. It is also mandated to “coordinate the implementation of the CARP and to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the necessary support services (to its beneficiaries)”⁴.

To underscore the vital role of the PARC in implementation of the CARP, the President designated herself as chair of the Council, with the Secretary (Minister) of Agrarian Reform as vice chair. The heads of several other key government departments and agencies (including the Executive Secretary, who is roughly the

equivalent of a Prime Minister) were also made members of the PARC. These include the Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture (DA), Environment & Natural Resources (DENR), Budget & Management (DBM), Finance (DOF), Justice (DOJ), Labor & Employment (DOLE), Interior & Local Government (DILG), Public Works & Highways (DPWH), Trade & Industry (DTI), Transportation & Communication (DOTC); the Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); the President of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP); and the Chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG). In addition, the President appointed representatives of agrarian reform beneficiaries and landowners to the Council⁵.

The PARC Executive Committee (PARC ExCom)

The PARC ExCom drafts major policies for the approval of the full PARC. However, since the full PARC meets only once or twice a year, the PARC ExCom, which meets on a quarterly basis, makes most of the decisions that cannot wait for the meeting of the full PARC, and these decisions are simply ratified by the full PARC during its annual or semi-annual meetings.

The PARC ExCom also supervises, facilitates and coordinates the implementation of the CARP by drawing up the targets and implementation schedules which become the basis for the plans of the different CARP Implementing Agencies or CIAs (see below). It also decides on the allocation of the approved CARP budget among these CIAs.

The PARC ExCom is composed of the DAR Secretary, who chairs it, and the heads or representatives of the Office of the Executive Secretary, the DA, DENR, DOF, DPWH, and the LBP, together with the representatives of the agrarian reform beneficiaries and the landowners.

The PARC Secretariat

The PARC and its ExCom are supported by the PARC Secretariat, which is administratively located in the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and is also headed by the DAR Secretary, as Director-General. However, a full-time Director assists him in managing the Secretariat on a day-to-day basis.

This Secretariat is responsible for preparing the initial draft of the framework of the six-year CARP medium-term plan, which it submits to the PARC ExCom for approval. This framework spells out the CARP's thrusts, priorities and strategies for the next medium-term period. Once approved, this framework becomes the basis of the CARP Implementing Agencies (CIAs, see below) for preparing their respective medium-term plans, which are then consolidated by the PARC

Secretariat into the CARP medium-term plan. This plan then goes to the PARC ExCom for approval, and from there, to the full PARC (unless the PARC is not due to meet soon, in which case the PARC ExCom's approval is considered final). Once approved, it goes to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the government's highest policy and planning body, for incorporation into the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP). This iterative planning process ensures not only that the medium-term plans of the various CIAs are consistent with the overall thrusts, priorities and strategies of the CARP, as approved by the PARC ExCom, but that the entire CARP medium-term plan is consistent with the overall Philippine medium-term development plan, as approved by the NEDA Board which, like the PARC, is headed by the President.

The approved CARP medium-term plan then becomes the basis for the CIAs to prepare their respective annual plans and budgets, which are submitted to the PARC Secretariat for evaluation and integration. The resulting indicative annual CARP Plan then goes to the Department of the Budget and Management (DBM) for consideration of its proposed budgetary requirement. The DBM sets the CARP baseline budget, which is usually lower than that submitted by the PARC Secretariat. The allocation of the reduced proposed budget is then negotiated by the CIAs among themselves, with the PARC Secretariat acting as mediator.

This reduced proposed budget then goes to the Congress of the Philippines for its approval. It first goes to the Sub-Committee on Agrarian Reform of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives (the Lower House), then to the Committee on Appropriations itself, before it is presented to the entire House in plenary session for approval. A similar process takes place in the Senate (the Upper House), starting with the Committee on Agrarian Reform, before it goes to the Finance Committee (the counterpart of the Lower House's Appropriations Committee), then to the full Senate in plenary session. When both Houses have approved their respective versions of the total national budget, the two versions are deliberated upon in a Bicameral Conference Committee (composed of representatives of both Houses of Congress) in order to arrive at a version acceptable to both Houses. The two Houses, meeting separately, then ratify the compromise version, before it goes to the President of the Philippines for signing into law.

Throughout all the congressional processes, the PARC Secretariat monitors the progress of the proposed budget and provides assistance to the DAR Secretary in defending the proposed budget in the various congressional hearings.

Once the CARP budget is approved (together with the rest of the national budget), the PARC Secretariat issues a priority list of activities and working guidelines for the preparation by the CIAs of their respective work and financial ensures that they are consistent with the approved CARP budget for the year.

It is also the PARC Secretariat who initiates and follows-up the release of the budgetary allotments of the different CIAs, and monitors the performance of the CIAs and the expenditures that they make against their allotments.

PARC Technical Committee

The PARC Secretariat is assisted by a PARC Technical Committee (PARC TechCom), particularly in the preparation of the draft framework for the CARP medium-term plan, and in assessing the performance of each CIA, the result of which assessment is used as one of the bases for establishing the Program's planning parameters (i.e., targets and budgets). The PARC TechCom draws its members from technical staff of the PARC ExCom member agencies.

The Provincial Agrarian Reform Coordinating Committee (PARCCOM)

The PARC structure is replicated at the provincial level in the Provincial Agrarian Reform Coordinating Committee (PARCCOM), which was created under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) or Republic Act (RA) 6657⁶. The PARCCOM is a multi-sectoral body composed of representatives of the government, non-government organizations, and the private sector (landowners and farmers). It has thirteen (13) members, with the chair appointed by the President of the Philippines from among the private sector representatives. Its main role is to coordinate and monitor the CARP's implementation in the province, to ensure that it achieves its objectives as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

The Barangay Agrarian Reform Committee (BARC)

The PARC structure is further replicated at the village (barangay) level in the Barangay Agrarian Reform Committee (BARC), itself a creation of RA 6657. Like the PARCCOM at the provincial level, the BARC is a multi-sectoral body composed of government and private sector representatives. It serves as the mediator and conciliator between parties involved in agrarian disputes. Among its specific functions are: (a) to assist the DAR personnel in the identification of qualified farmer-beneficiaries, as well as of landowners and their landholdings within the barangay; (b) verify and attest to the accuracy of the initial parcellary mapping of the prospective beneficiaries' tillage; c) assist the LBP in the initial determination of the value of the land to be covered by CARP; (d) and coordinate the delivery of support services to the CARP beneficiaries.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION (Part 1): The CARP Implementing Agencies

As mentioned earlier, CARP's "comprehensiveness" also means a diversity of services and activities that are carried out by a diverse set of implementing agencies. These agencies are collectively known as the "CARP Implementing Agencies" or "CIAs". Their respective roles in implementing major aspects of the Program are described below.

The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR)

The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) is the "lead implementing agency" of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). It was created in 1971 under Republic Act No. 6389 to replace the Land Authority, which was the agency created in 1963 under Republic Act No. 3844 to carry out the "Agricultural Land Reform Code of the Philippines". (In 1978, when the Philippines briefly adopted a parliamentary form of government, the DAR was renamed "Ministry of Agrarian Reform" [MAR]. Consequently, its head, the Secretary of Agrarian Reform, was given the title "Minister of Agrarian Reform", while the Undersecretaries were given the title "Deputy Minister of Agrarian Reform". In 1986, the Philippines returned to the presidential system of government, so the "MAR" reverted to "DAR". However, in 2004, it was renamed "Department of Land Reform" [DLR] by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in order to accommodate the attachment to it of agencies concerned with urban land reform and ancestral domains. One year later, realizing that the term "land reform" does not adequately capture the totality of factors and support services included in the CARP, the President returned the name "Department of Agrarian Reform" to the agency.)

As "lead implementing agency" of the CARP, DAR's mandate is to carry out the principal aspects of the Program, which are **Land Tenure Improvement (LTI)**, **Program Beneficiary Development (PBD)**, and **the Delivery of Agrarian Justice (DAJ)**.

The LTI aspect of the Program is further subdivided into **Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD)** and **Non-LAD Schemes**. The latter include **Leasehold Operations (LO)**, the **Stock Distribution Option (SDO)**, and **Production and Profit Sharing (PPS)**.

Under **Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD)**, the DAR identifies agricultural lands that are "CARP-able" (i.e., eligible for coverage under the CARP, in accordance with the provisions of the law), acquires this (through various means, i.e., by compulsory acquisition, or voluntary offer to sell, or voluntary land

transfer by the landowner to his tenants or farmworkers), and distributes them to qualified beneficiaries (i.e., agricultural lessees and share tenants, regular farmworkers, seasonal farmworkers, other farmworkers, actual tillers or occupants of public lands, collectives or cooperatives of these beneficiaries, and other directly working on the land, in that order), who then either pay for these lands through the Land Bank of the Philippines (in the case of those acquired under compulsory acquisition [CA] or the voluntary offer to sell [VOS]) or directly to their former owners (for those voluntarily transferred by the landowner to the beneficiaries). For lands acquired by CA or through a VOS, the Land Bank pays the former landowners the value of the land as determined either by the Bank itself, or in the case of dispute over the valuation, by the DAR Adjudication Board (DARAB) or the Special Agrarian Court (SAC) or higher courts (all the way up to the Supreme Court), to whom the former landowners can appeal the ruling of the DARAB and the lower courts.

Under **Leasehold Operations (LO)**, the DAR mediates between landowners and the tenants of lands that are within the allowable retention ceiling of five (5) hectares per landowner, so that the share tenancy arrangement between the two could be transformed into a leasehold arrangement, whereby the tenants become agricultural lessees who, instead of paying the landowner a percentage share of the produce (usually larger for the landowner), will instead pay a fixed rental that is computed on the basis of historical production records (which, generally, is lower than the share that the tenants used to give the landowner under the previous share tenancy arrangement).

The **Stock Distribution Option (SDO)** refers to the scheme whereby, instead of being awarded a piece of the land that is owned and is being utilized by a corporation as a plantation of, say, sugar or pineapple, the farmworkers therein receive shares of stock in the corporation, equivalent to the value that the land has in relation to the total assets of the corporation. In effect, therefore, they have contributed the land to the corporation's capital stock as their equity investment, for which they become entitled to receive a corresponding share in the profits of the plantation, aside from being continuously employed by it.

The **Production and Profit Sharing (PPS)** scheme, on the other hand, is a scheme whereby, “pending final land or stock transfer, individuals or entities owning, or operating under lease or management contract, agricultural lands are xxx mandated to execute a production-sharing plan with their farmworkers or farmworkers' organization, if any, whereby three percent (3%) of the gross sales from the production of such lands are distributed within sixty (60) days of the end of the fiscal year as compensation to regular and other farmworkers in such lands, over and above they compensation they currently receive xxxx In the event that the individual or entity realizes a profit, an additional ten percent (10%)

of the net profit after tax shall be distributed to said regular and other farmworkers within ninety (90 days of the end of the fiscal year"⁷.

Under the **Program for Beneficiary Development (PBD)**, DAR establishes **Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs)**, which become the focus of its support services. DAR organizes the agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) in these ARCs into farmers' associations or cooperatives, and provides them training, credit, support infrastructures, and production and marketing assistance, to enable them to maximize the benefits of being new landowner-cultivators under the CARP.

To manage and coordinate the support services that are funded by official development assistance (ODA) from various governments and multilateral agencies and development banks (UN, World Bank, ADB, JBIC), DAR has a **Foreign Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO)** that is headed by an Executive Director, usually in the person of the Undersecretary or Assistant Secretary for Support Services. Several Project Management Offices (PMOs) come under the FAPsO, one for each of the foreign-assisted projects⁸.

As would be seen later, several other CARP Implementing Agencies (CIAs), as well as Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), are also involved in the delivery of support services to the ARBs, under the coordination and supervision of the DAR.

The third major responsibility of the DAR is the **Delivery of Agrarian Justice (DAJ)**. It carries this out through its **Bureau of Agrarian Legal Assistance (BALA)** and the **DAR Adjudication Board (DARAB)**.

The **BALA**, as its name suggests, provides legal assistance to ARBs, particularly those whose legal rights as CARP beneficiaries are challenged by landowners. In view of shortage of personnel and funds, however, the BALA has to depend on the participation of NGOs in providing legal assistance to the ARBs, as will be seen later.

The **DARAB**, on the other hand, adjudicates disputes pertaining to tenancy relations; valuation of lands acquired by DAR under the compulsory acquisition mode; rights and obligations of persons, whether natural or juridical, engaged in the management cultivation and use of all agricultural lands; ejectment and dispossession of tenants/leaseholders; review of leasehold rentals; and other similar disputes involving the implementation of the CARP.

DAR implements all these aspects of CARP through an extensive bureaucracy of close to **15,000 personnel** who are distributed to 15 regional offices, 79 provincial offices, and about 1,400 municipal offices throughout the length and

breadth of the Philippine archipelago. This bureaucracy is one of the few national government organizations that has remained intact since the Local Government Code of 1988 devolved the services and personnel of several other government agencies to the local government units.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

The 8,061,864 hectares of agricultural land that is targeted to be distributed by the Philippine Government under the CARP is divided into privately-owned lands, government-owned lands, and public alienable and disposable (A&D) lands. The distribution of the first two categories of lands, which comprise 4,290,453 hectares, is the responsibility of the DAR, while the distribution of the third category – the public A&D lands – is the responsibility of the DENR.

A total of 3,771,411 hectares of public A&D lands are targeted for distribution by the DENR, primarily to those who have occupied and cultivated these lands for at least thirty (30) years, and have religiously paid real estate taxes on them. The DENR issues “Free Patents” to these persons and these Free Patents are eventually converted into Original Certificates of Title (OCTs) once registered with the Registry of Deeds (ROD) of the Land Registration Authority (LRA, see below).

The DENR is also responsible for the survey of public A & D lands that it distributes, and for the inspection, verification and approval of surveys carried out by DAR on the lands that it has targeted for coverage under the CARP.

The Land Registration Authority (LRA)

The LRA, which is an agency attached to the Department of Justice (DOJ), is charged with the registration of the Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) that are issued by the DAR to the ARBs, and the Free Patents that are issued by the DENR. This registration, which is carried out by the LRA’s Register of Deeds (RODs) assigned in all provinces of the country, completes the legal requirements for the transfer or award of lands to the ARBs.

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP)

The LBP was specifically established by law to be, as its name suggests, the financial arm of the Philippine agrarian reform program. Its primary responsibility is the valuation and payment of lands that are acquired by the Government for distribution to the farmer beneficiaries, and collection of the amortization payments for those lands from the beneficiaries.

The Land Bank is also the major source of credit assistance to the ARBs, particularly those which are organized into cooperatives. It extends credit to the cooperatives on a “wholesale basis”, and the cooperatives, in turn, “retail” such credit to their members. To enable the cooperatives to “retail” the credit to their members at lower-than-market rates, and still earn a small profit out of this operation, the Land Bank extends the credit to the cooperatives at subsidized rates.

The Bank also has a commercial lending window through which it lends to small and medium industries at commercial rates. The profits that it derives from this commercial operation is what it uses to subsidize its lending to the cooperatives.

The Department of Agriculture (DA)

The DA was originally charged with providing technical assistance to the ARBs in their agricultural production by way of facilitating their access to production inputs, marketing and credit information, and post-production facilities (e.g., milling, warehousing, transport). However, with the devolution of agricultural extension services to the Local Government Units (LGUs) pursuant to the Local Government Code of 1992, this assistance is now undertaken by the Provincial and Municipal Agriculturists who are part of the LGU bureaucracy, with the DA providing technical assistance to special projects that are of national coverage.

However, the DA is still responsible for national programs for agricultural improvement. Hence, it still works with the DAR in the implementation of such programs among the ARBs, especially those in the Agrarian Reform Communities (see “The Convergence Concept” below).

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA)

The NIA is an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture. Its mandate is to construct, rehabilitate and maintain government-owned irrigation facilities all over the country. The construction or rehabilitation, and maintenance, of communal irrigation facilities is one of the major support services that is provided to the ARBs by the CARP. For this purpose, the NIA receives an annual allocation of funds from the CARP budget.

As a necessary adjunct to the construction and maintenance of irrigation facilities, the NIA also builds what have come to be known as “NIA roads”. These are access roads running parallel to the irrigation canals, the main purpose of which is to facilitate the maintenance of those canals, but they have become an important by-way as well for those residing along those canals.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)

The DPWH undertakes the construction and rehabilitation of farm-to-market roads, bridges and multi-purpose pavements that are part of the CARP's support services. These are also among the major support services provided to the ARBs by the CARP. Most of these infrastructure is funded out of official development assistance (ODA) to the CARP, with the Philippine Government, both national and local, putting in counterpart funding.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

The DTI provides technical assistance to the ARBs in establishing market-linkages for their products, as well as for establishing and nurturing their small-scale industries. One of the strategies it employs to deliver this service is the organization of trade fairs and market linkage events, where the ARBs are able to display their products and negotiate directly with both wholesale and retail buyers.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)

The DOLE, through its Bureau of Rural Workers (BRWs), helps in organizing and training farmworkers in plantations (sugar, banana, pineapple, palm oil) that have been identified for distribution to those farmworkers under the CARP.

The CARP Implementing Teams (CITs)

To ensure effective and smooth coordination among the field offices of the aforementioned CIAs, CARP Implementing Teams (CITs) have been organized at the regional, provincial and municipal levels (RCITs, PCITs, MCITs), composed of the regional, provincial and municipal heads of the CIAs. These CITs, which are convened by the DAR Regional Director, Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer (PARO), or Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO), as the case may be, meet regularly in order to discuss and resolve issues in CARP implementation, particularly those pertaining to LTI and PBD. In some areas, the composition of the CITs is expanded to include the field personnel of non-CIAs, and CSO representatives who are involved in CARP implementation. In regions, provinces and municipalities where the CITs are active, they have proven to be effective venues for forging partnerships and coordination of work among these different agencies and organizations involved in the CARP.

The CONVERGENCE Concept

In 1998, the Secretaries of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Agriculture (DA), and Natural Resources & Environment (DENR), got together to discuss how they can complement each other's program to optimize the use of scarce government resources in addressing the widespread incidence of poverty and environmental problems in the rural areas of the country. They decided that one way to do this was to synchronize or "converge" their poverty- and environment-focused programs so that their limited resources, put together, would be able to bring about significant improvements in the lives of the residents of those areas, in environmentally-sustainable ways. To facilitate this convergence of programs, the three agencies adopted a common framework for **Sustainable Rural Development (SRD)**, and nine pilot sites were chosen to try out the concept. These were the Cagayan Valley River Basin in North Luzon; the entire Central Luzon; the Bicol River Basin in South Luzon; the islands of Negros, Panay and Bohol in the Visayas; and the Davao Provinces, Zamboanga Peninsula, and the Caraga Region in Mindanao. In each of these sites, the three agencies would select specific areas where their "focus areas" are adjacent to, or overlap with, one another.

For DAR, the focus areas for its support services are the **Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs)**. These are clusters of villages where at least 80% of the agricultural lands targeted for distribution under the CARP have been distributed. It is, in DAR's parlance, virtually "LAD-free" or where the LAD (Land Acquisition & Distribution) component of CARP is almost completed and all that remains to be done is to provide the agrarian reform beneficiaries therein the support services that they require to ensure that the lands awarded to them become as productive as possible.

The focus areas of the DA, on the other hand, are known as "**SAFDZs**" for "**Strategic Agricultural and Fisheries Development Zones**". Like the ARCs, these are clusters of villages which are envisioned under the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (AFMA, R.A. 8435) as centers of development in the agriculture and fisheries sectors. As such, they have been identified to be the strategic location for the establishment of agriculture or fisheries infrastructure, industrial complexes, production and processing zones.

In the case of the DENR, they focus their farmer-oriented services in the **Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM)** areas. These are forestry areas, the stewardship of which have been awarded to groups of farmers who manage the harvest of mature trees and re-plant the areas harvested so that there is a continuous growth of forest trees.

A national “Convergence Committee” consisting of the heads of the three participating agencies (DAR, DA, DENR) was organized to serve as the highest policy-making and monitoring body of the “convergence concept”. Their respective undersecretaries for programs or operations served as their alternates in this committee. Similar committees were organized at the regional and provincial levels, with the three agencies' regional and provincial heads or representatives sitting as members. These lower level committees drafted Area Investment Plans (AIPs) for each of the nine (9) pilot convergence sites, and these were submitted to the national committee for approval. These AIPs then served as the framework within which each of the three agencies implemented their respective programs and projects in the convergence sites, thus ensuring complementation of services and activities.

In spite of the several changes that have taken place in the leadership of the three agencies since this concept was first hatched in 1998, the concept has remained alive and continues to be cited by the current heads of these three agencies as the basis for planning and implementing their respective poverty- and environment-focused programs in those areas where their focus areas converge.

“Task Force Bondoc Peninsula (TFBP)”

This was a special body composed of representatives of several government agencies and one particular NGO that was organized by the DAR Secretary in 1998 in order to address a particularly difficult CARP implementation problem in one area of the country called the “Bondoc Peninsula”. Calling it a “task force” (instead of the more common term, “committee”) meant that it had a **specific task** to perform, and that it would exist only until that task is accomplished. It is included in this paper to illustrate one particular institutional arrangement that is resorted to from time-to-time in order to address special problems and situations in the implementation of CARP.

TFBP was organized in August 1998 to address the problem of installing agrarian reform beneficiaries in Barangay (village) Catulin, in a town of Buenavista, in the Bondoc Peninsula. This peninsula is a part of Quezon Province in the southern part of Luzon, the main island of the Philippines. The owner of this piece of land, aside from being reputed to be one of the biggest landowners in that part of the country (with thousands of hectares of land to his name and those of his close relatives), was known to have in his employ hundreds of private security guards (a virtual “private army”) who have prevented the beneficiaries from entering the land of which they are the recognized tenants (by decision of the DAR

Adjudication Board or DARAB). Efforts by DAR personnel alone to install the farmers on the land have repeatedly been repulsed by the private security guards, who were heavily armed.

Hence, the DAR Secretary decided to call on the assistance of other government agencies, particularly the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), to help it in installing the farmer beneficiaries. To formalize the participation of these other agencies, the DAR Secretary decided to organize the TFBP, and included in it representatives of civilian offices, such as the Department of Justice, the Provincial Government of Quezon, the Legislative Representative (Congressman) of the district where the contested land is located, and the NGO which was helping the beneficiaries petition the Government for assistance. The Secretary designated this writer, who was then the DAR Senior Undersecretary, to head this task force.

After several days of thorough planning, the TFBP decided to install the farmer beneficiaries on a particular day. Armed with the DARAB Decision ordering the landowner not to obstruct the entry of the farmers into the land, the TFBP members and the farmers entered the contested property on the designated day, without any resistance from the landowner's security guards because they were earlier disarmed and dispersed by the soldiers and police officers who went ahead of the TFBP in the installation activity.

Thereafter, the AFP left behind some of the soldiers to watch over the farmer beneficiaries in order to ensure that they will not be driven out of the land again by the landowner and his "private army" of security guards. After several months, the landowner finally "conceded defeat" so the soldiers could be pulled out, and the farmer beneficiaries have since been living and working in that land without any problem.

While the use of the armed forces or the police in supporting the implementation of Government programs may be commonplace in some countries, one must remember that in the context of the Philippine's newly-regained democratic system after many years of martial rule, the use of the military and the police in support of development work (in contrast to their previous role as the country's "rulers") was still a rather unique, if not unusual, occurrence at the time this activity took place (in 1998).

Therefore, the success of this collaboration among the DAR, the AFP, the PNP and other government agencies and one NGO in solving the Bondoc Peninsula problem was subsequently hailed by the mass media as a "shining example" of what Government can do to solve even the most difficult problem, if it has the political will to do so. In fact, this special institutional arrangement has been found to be so effective that the DAR has resorted to it again from time-to-time to address similarly difficult CARP implementation problems elsewhere.

III. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION (Part 2): The Role of Civil Society Organizations

A unique feature of the Philippine agrarian reform program is the active and substantial participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) – both non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and people’s organizations (POs) – in the planning and implementation of the CARP. This is specifically provided in the Declaration of Principles and Policies of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL).⁹

The Congress for a People’s Agrarian Reform (CPAR)

From the beginning of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), civil society organizations (CSOs) have been active participants in shaping it and in its eventual implementation.

In May 1987, a national congress of major peasant and fisherfolk organizations – the **Congress for a People’s Agrarian Reform or CPAR** -- brought together, for the first time, groups of different ideological persuasions in order to discuss and arrive at a consensus on what kind of agrarian reform program Government should be implementing. This national congress came out with a declaration of eight (8) principles which they felt should characterize a “genuine” agrarian reform program. These principles called for: (1) a land-to-the-tiller program, the abolition of absentee landownership, access of small fisherfolk to water resources, and the abolition of absentee proprietorship; (2) comprehensive coverage of all agricultural land regardless of classification, crop planted, existing tenurial form or farm size, water and other natural resources; (3) the terms and conditions of land transfer not to be made burdensome to the beneficiaries; (4) full and genuine participation of agrarian reform beneficiaries in program planning, implementation and monitoring; (5) full provision of adequate, timely and appropriate support services for agrarian reform beneficiaries through the reorientation of all government departments towards emphasizing the central role of agrarian reform in their activities; (6) compensation to landowners to be based on farm size, mode of acquisition and other relevant factors; (7) preferential option for cooperatives and collective farms in the production, marketing and credit levels wherever and whenever possible; and (8) the use of local resources for agrarian reform¹⁰.

As we can now see, most of these principles found their way into Republic Act No. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL), which was passed by the Congress of the Philippines in June of the following year (1988), and even if a number of the CSOs which were part of CPAR were

critical of this law because they felt that it has “watered down” the spirit and intent of the CARP, many still continued to support and participate in its various phases and aspects, as described below.

CSO Participation in Policy Formulation and Program Planning

As earlier mentioned, nine (9) private sector representatives sit in the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC), the highest policy-making and coordinative body of the CARP. Three (3) of these represent the landowners’ sector, while six (6) represent the farmer-beneficiaries.

These representatives, who are appointed to the PARC by the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of their respective sectors, belong to associations of landowners or farmer-beneficiaries, and are usually national-level officers of their respective associations. Thus, they are very well-informed and articulate, and are very forceful in representing the concerns of their respective sectors in the deliberations of the PARC or of its Executive Committee (PARC ExCom). Hence, while they constitute a minority of the PARC or ExCom members, their voices carry much weight in policy formulation and program decision-making.

At the provincial level, the private sector representatives in the Provincial Agrarian Reform Coordinating Committees (PARCCOM) are also able to articulate the interest of their sector in the implementation of the CARP in their respective provinces.

The DAR also invites CSOs to participate in its workshops and conferences where policies and program plans are periodically reviewed and assessed. In fact, the participation of CSOs in these processes has been institutionalized through the creation of a special body within the DAR to facilitate the consultations and dialogues between CSOs and the DAR bureaucracy¹¹. This is intended to “regularize” the intermittent, and often confrontational, dialogues with the DAR officials that the CSOs themselves initiate, in order to address specific problems in program implementation, such as the non-installation of ARBs on lands awarded to them due to the resistance of the former landowners, or the exclusion of certain agricultural lands from CARP coverage due to the manipulation of their landowners, with the collusion of certain CIA officials.

At the provincial level, one mechanism that has been utilized by DAR from time-to-time to involve CSOs in the assessment of program implementation and the resolution of outstanding issues is the Provincial Consultation on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (PROCARRD), where NGOs and POs participate actively.

The Congress of the Philippines, both its House of Representatives and the Senate, also regularly invite CSO representatives as resource persons in deliberations on proposed legislations on agrarian reform. Some CSO representatives are even included in congressional technical working groups to draft or re-draft agrarian reform legislations.

Apart from these venues for participation in policy formulation and program planning, several CSO are also active in advocacy for agrarian reform through the issuance of position papers, conduct of policy and evaluative studies, lobbying, and mass actions (i.e., rallies and demonstrations). At this time, for instance, many CSOs are involved in lobbying Congress to pass legislation to extend the effectivity of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL, R.A. 6657) -- which is due to expire in 2008 -- for another 5 to 7 years, to enable the DAR to complete the acquisition and distribution of the large private agricultural lands that remain in the hands of big landowners, and to be able to provide support services to a wider sector of the ARBs than it has so far been able to reach with those services.

CSO Participation in Land Tenure Improvement

CSOs play a significant role in the Land Tenure Improvement (LTI) aspect of CARP, particularly those that are engaged in organizing potential or prospective and actual agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs), to enable them to effectively assert their rights under the CARP. Oftentimes, potential or prospective ARBs have to fight to be included in the list of beneficiaries of certain landholdings whose owners, in protesting the coverage of their lands under the CARP, use the ruse of questioning the qualification of the prospective beneficiaries to delay the process of coverage. Even actual beneficiaries often need to be organized in order to effectively counter the tactics of former landowners who prevent them from taking possession of the lands awarded to them by employing armed security guards to keep them off those lands (as in the case of the Bondoc Peninsula which was cited earlier). Without the assistance of CSOs, the DAR would not be able to handle all of the organizing work that needs to be done because they do not have enough experienced community organizers nor enough funds for this purpose. The CSOs do not only contribute their community organizers to this effort, but also shoulder their own operational expenses from funds that they are able to solicit from donor organizations that support agrarian reform. Hence, the participation of CSOs in the LTI aspect of CARP comes as a significant “bonus” to the DAR.

CSO Participation in Program Beneficiary Development

If it is necessary to organize potential or prospective and actual beneficiaries to enable them to secure and protect their rights under the LTI aspect of CARP, it is also necessary to organize actual beneficiaries who no longer have any LTI problem so that they can realize the maximum benefit of CARP under its Program Beneficiary Development (PBD) aspect. Capacity-building, technical assistance, credit extension, production and post-production support are available only to organized groups of ARBs.

Here again, DAR depends on CSOs, particularly NGOs involved in rural development activities, to organize the ARBs and build their institutional capacities (such as those for the planning and implementation of their own projects). NGOs that have technical expertise in agricultural production, or micro- and small-scale enterprise development, or marketing, are also tapped by the DAR to provide training and technical assistance to ARB organizations in these fields.

CSO Participation in the Delivery of Agrarian Justice

As mentioned earlier, the DAR's Bureau of Agrarian Legal Assistance (BALA), whose main function is to provide legal assistance to the ARBs, is so shorthanded that it is unable to address all the requests for assistance coming from ARBs who face court cases that have been filed against them by landowners in order to hamper the implementation of the CARP.

Fortunately, there are NGOs that provide legal and/or financial assistance to ARBs who face such court cases. These NGOs have lawyers who belong to "alternative law groups". These are lawyers who have chosen to involve themselves in agrarian reform and human rights cases, rather than take up the more lucrative practice of lawyering for corporations and rich individuals. These NGO lawyers provide legal advice, prepare pleadings, and represent ARBs in court hearings, all for free or for a minimal honorarium or allowance.

One particular NGO, the **Agrarian Justice Foundation, Inc.** (which this writer organized when he was with the DAR, and which he now heads as Executive Trustee), provides financial assistance to ARBs for bail bonds so they can secure their temporary liberty while their cases are under trial, and for hiring lawyers to represent them in their court cases (for those who are not represented by NGO lawyers), as well as for court fees and related expenses (e.g., transportation to and from the court hearings). In addition, this NGO organizes seminar-workshops on agrarian justice for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcers in order to update them on the laws and jurisprudence pertaining to agrarian cases, as part of the strategy to minimize the number of criminal cases that are filed by

landowners against ARBs, most of which are simply meant to harass them, and to delay or derail the implementation of the CARP.

Funding of CSO Participation in CARP

CSOs have basically two sources of the funds they use for their participation in the CARP. One are non-governmental donor agencies, both inside and outside the country (but mostly from outside, particularly Europe), who support agrarian reform and related programs (e.g., small farmer development, sustainable agriculture, cooperatives development, etc.). The other is the DAR itself, which funds the participation of NGOs, particularly in the support services component of CARP, either from its own funds or from official development assistance (ODA) to the FAPs (Foreign-Assisted Projects).

IV. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A complex and multi-faceted national program such as the CARP requires a multi-layered monitoring and evaluation (M & E) system to ensure that all its facets are effectively monitored and evaluated. The following describes the various M & E units and systems that do these.

The PARC Audit Management and Investigation Committee (AMIC)

At the apex of the multi-layered CARP monitoring and evaluation system is the AMIC, which is a permanent body under the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC), the highest policy-making and coordinative body of the CARP.

The AMIC, which was created by Resolution of the PARC Executive Committee, is made up of representatives of the PARC member agencies, and is chaired by the head of the PARC Secretariat's CARP Planning, Coordination and Monitoring Service (CPCMS). As its name states, it manages the annual audit of the CARP and investigates irregularities that such annual audit unearths in the implementation of the CARP at the field level. The actual audit is undertaken by Audit Teams that the AMIC organizes, with members drawn from the PARC member agencies and its private sector representatives. The AMIC also determines the audit scope, methodology and timetable¹².

The actual investigation of irregularities unearthed by the Audit Teams, on the other hand, is undertaken by an Ad Hoc Technical Working Group (TWG) that the PARC ExCom has also created, with members also drawn from the PARC member agencies and private sector representatives¹³.

Results of the annual CARP audit and of any investigation that is conducted by the AMIC through the Ad Hoc TWG are submitted by the AMIC to the PARC ExCom, which uses these reports to review and revise (if indicated) the CARP policies and implementation strategies, as well as to take appropriate action on agencies and individuals found guilty of any violation of laws, policies, rules or regulations pertaining to the CARP.

The PARC Secretariat

The PARC Secretariat also performs regular monitoring and evaluation functions to assess the performance of the different CIAs of their respective Work and Financial Plans (WFP). These functions are carried out jointly by the two units of the PARC Secretariat, namely: the CARP Planning, Coordination and Monitoring Service (CPCMS) and the Agrarian Reform Fund Management Service (ARFMS). The CPCMS monitors and assesses the implementation of the CIAs' plans, while the ARFMS monitors and assesses how the CIAs utilize the allotments that have been provided to them from the Agrarian Reform Fund (ARF).

The CIAs submit quarterly progress reports on their respective WFPs to the PARC Secretariat, who verifies and evaluates these reports, and prepares appropriate action recommendations to the PARC ExCom on the issues and concerns that are raised in the reports. The PARC Secretariat also uses the CIAs' reports to build up and maintain a database on each of the CIAs, which becomes the source of the consolidated database report that the Secretariat submits to the PARC ExCom, also on a quarterly basis.

The Provincial CARP Coordinating Committee (PARCCOM)

As mentioned earlier, the PARCCOMs are responsible for monitoring the CARP implementation in their respective provinces, and they submit quarterly reports to the PARC Secretariat on the results of their monitoring activities. The substance of these reports is incorporated by the Secretariat in the consolidated monitoring report that it submits to the PARC ExCom every quarter.

The DAR Management Information Service (MIS)

This unit collates, analyzes and interprets statistical reports from the DAR field offices, particularly those pertaining to their accomplishments in the three major aspects of CARP (i.e., Land Tenure Improvement, Program Beneficiary Development and Delivery of Agrarian Justice), for submission to DAR management who, in turn, utilize these reports both to monitor and assess the performance of each regional and provincial office, and of the agency as a whole, as well as to prepare its annual plans. In the past, the MIS has been able to provide these reports to DAR management only on a quarterly basis. However, since the entire agency (i.e., central and field offices) has been connected to the internet, it has become possible to receive, collate, analyze, interpret and report the data on a monthly basis, particularly those pertaining to the LTI accomplishments. Incidentally, the MIS is also responsible for the DAR's Information Community Technology (ICT) development, maintenance and upgrading.

The FAPsO M & E Unit

While all of the foreign-assisted projects (FAPs) that are being implemented by DAR as part of the Program Beneficiary Development (PBD) aspect of CARP have their own monitoring and evaluation units, DAR saw it fit to organize a central Monitoring and Evaluation Staff (MES) under the Executive Director of the Foreign Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO) in order to: (a) standardize the monitoring and evaluation systems of the different FAPs; (b) validate the progress/status reports of the different FAPs; and (c) consolidate the individual FAP's reports into a single report for submission to, and use by, DAR management¹⁴.

The M & E Units of other CIAs

On top of the PARC and DAR monitoring and evaluation units, all the other CARP Implementing Agencies (CIAs) have their own monitoring and evaluation units that take charge of monitoring and evaluating their respective agencies' performance in the CARP. These agency M & E units are the ones that prepare their agency reports, which are submitted to, collate and analyzed by the PARC Secretariat.

Special Evaluation Studies

From time to time, the PARC ExCom, the DAR, and some of the other CIAs commission special evaluation studies in order to assess the performance of the CARP in certain areas.

An example of this is a study on the impact of CARP on its beneficiaries, particularly those that reside within Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs). The study was commissioned to a university unit that specializes in agrarian reform studies.

Another example is a study on the possible scenarios for CARP when its current mandate (under R.A. 6657, as amended by R.A. 8532) “expires” in 2008. This study was commissioned to a group that was specifically organized for this purpose, and funded by the development assistance arm of a foreign government.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Multi-Layered M & E Systems

The obvious advantage of a multi-layered monitoring and evaluation system such as that described above is that practically no aspect of the CARP is left unmonitored and un-evaluated, from the identification of lands for coverage under the Program, to their acquisition and distribution, and the delivery of the various support services to the Program's beneficiaries. Hence, implementation problems, issues and concerns are immediately identified and acted upon.

The less obvious disadvantage, on the other hand, is the difficulty of synchronizing data, when they come from many sources. Hence, up to this time, many of the CIA's, including DAR and the PARC itself, are struggling with inconsistencies in some of the data, including some basic data such as the total area of agricultural lands that are “CARP-able”. Hence, there have been several attempts to validate the scope of CARP over the years, and even up to now, there does not seem to be a single figure that is agreed upon by all the agencies concerned. Fortunately, however, these inconsistencies in the data are not too significant as to seriously hamper Program implementation.

V. REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT, BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL, TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS OF ACTORS

One impression that a multi-layered monitoring and evaluation system gives is that the CARP is a highly- and tightly-regulated Program, where there are very strict bureaucratic controls that impinge on the autonomy of the CIAs and even the participating CSOs which, in turn, negatively affect transparency and the openness of the various actors to work with each other.

While it is true that the CARP may, in some ways, be “over-monitored” and “over-evaluated”, and that the number of administrative orders, memoranda circulars, and similar regulatory issuances that cover the various aspects of CARP implementation can easily fill up a dozen thick volumes, the Program still has been able to retain a relatively “open and relaxed” regulatory environment that has given the different participating agencies and organizations, both government and non-government, wide latitude in terms of planning and implementing their respective components of the Program.

This is because there is a very high degree of participation from these CIAs and NGOs in policy formulation, planning and program management, as narrated above, from the national level to the village level. Hence, they are able to put in their own suggestions on how the CARP could be more effectively implemented, and are in fact able to participate in the decision-making through their membership in the PARC and the PARC ExCom.

The planning and budgeting process, which is iterative, is also very transparent, so that it promotes openness and cooperation among the participating agencies.

However, when it comes to protecting the rights of the agrarian reform beneficiaries, the regulations are quite strict, and necessarily so because the opponents of agrarian reform in this country (i.e., the big landowners and their “allies” in some government agencies, including the legislature and the judiciary) are very “innovative” when it comes to finding ways to circumvent the law and deny the beneficiaries their rights under the Program. This is why even the Supreme Court had had to issue Decisions and Orders to protect the rights of the agrarian reform beneficiaries, even as it ensures that they perform their obligations under the Program, and the rights of the landowners are likewise protected.

All these, in turn, contribute to an effective and efficient implementation of the CARP.

VI. INSIGHTS AND LESSONS

Having had the privilege of working with the DAR for a almost three years as Senior Undersecretary/Vice Minister (from July 1998 to February 2001, in the Government of former President Joseph Estrada), in charge of the Field Operations and Support Services Office (FOSSO), which directly supervised the implementation of the LAD and PBD aspects of CARP all over the country through the 15,000-strong bureaucracy that was mentioned earlier, and having been designated by the President as Acting Secretary/Minister whenever the Secretary was on official mission overseas, this writer had been able to gain valuable insights and lessons on the institutional aspects of the CARP's policy implementation and management. Some of the most important are given below.

1. If one truly wants to make a program a “centerpiece program” of Government, it should receive the full and unqualified support of no less than the Head of Government, and there is no better way to demonstrate that support than by the Head of Government himself or herself heading the highest policy making and coordinative body of that program. In the case of the Philippine Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), that body is the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) which, as reported above, is headed by no less than the President of the Philippines.

Of course, being head of such a body, by itself, will not send the message that the program is truly regarded as the “centerpiece program” of Government, unless that head also actively involves himself or herself in policy making and program monitoring through regular meetings of that body. Therefore, the head of this highest policy-making and coordinative body should ensure that he/she has enough time to convene the body frequently enough, at least twice a year, if not more often. (In the case of the PARC, it is usually able to meet only once a year, and it is its Executive Committee that meets more frequently. However, the Executive Committee is not headed by the President himself/herself, so its meetings do not convey the same importance to the program that meetings of the full PARC convey.)

In the case of former President Estrada, he made up for the infrequent meetings of the PARC by joining major CARP events whenever he could. These included such events as the ceremonial distribution of Certificates of Land Ownership Award [CLOAs] to agrarian reform beneficiaries; ground-breaking or inauguration of infrastructure projects that were built as part of the DAR's support services to the beneficiaries; inspection of completed projects funded by foreign governments (during which he is usually joined by the Ambassador of the donor government); and even a visit to the encampment of farmers who were on hunger strike to protest what they perceived to be an unfair decision of the

judiciary on their disputed claim over a piece of land. In this way, he was able to demonstrate that he was fully behind the implementation of the CARP.

2. Another important lesson is that even the most difficult problems of implementation could be solved if different agencies and organizations with a stake in the problem put their heads and hands together to address it. This lesson came from the experience of the “Task Force Bondoc Peninsula” (TFBP), which was narrated above.

3. Related to this is the lesson that special bodies that are organized for a specific, time-bound purpose, such as a “task force”, could be more effective than a standing committee that has multifarious tasks and has no definite deadline within which to accomplish its tasks. Having a specific and well-defined task (in the case of the TFBP, it was to “implement the DARAB Decision to install the CARP beneficiaries on the land in question”) and a deadline for doing so (the TFBP was given only one month from the date it was organized to accomplish its task) puts appropriate and adequate pressure on the task force members to perform their functions as effectively and as efficiently as they could.

4. Of course, the experience of managing the CARP has also taught us that for regular and recurring joint or common activities, a standing committee, such as the PARC, the PARC ExCom, the PARC TechCom, the PARCCOMs and BARCs, are more appropriate than “task forces”. However, this experience also taught us that for a standing committee such as those cited truly work effectively, a spirit of transparency and openness should pervade its meetings, in order to foster a collaborative atmosphere that one needs in order to ensure the effective complementation of work of the various agencies involved in the implementation of their common program, i.e., the CARP.

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ENDNOTES

¹ The earliest known Philippine legislation on land reform was passed more than 100 years ago, during the occupation of the Philippines by the United States of America. This was the Philippine Bill of 1902, which set ceilings on the size of land that private individuals and corporations may acquire: 16 hectares for private individuals, and 1,024 hectares for corporations. This changed the system introduced by the Spaniards during their occupation of the country (1521-1898) wherein the King of Spain gave out “Royal Land Grants” or “encomiendas” to church and government officials and other influential people, the size of which ran into the hundreds, sometimes thousands, of hectares.

² The CARP covers 8,061,864 hectares of agricultural lands, or 26.8% of the Philippines; total land area.

³ In Article II (Declaration of Principles and State Policies), Section 21 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. This is reiterated under Article XXII (National Economy and Patrimony), which states in Section 1, paragraph 2: “The state shall promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, xxx”. Article XIII (Social Justice and Human Rights) elaborates by providing (under Section 4) that “The state shall, by law, undertake an agrarian reform program founded on the right of farmers and regular farmworkers, who are landless, to own directly or collectively the lands that they till or in the case of other farmworkers, to receive a just share of the fruits thereof.”

⁴ Executive Order No. 229, Chapter IV, Section 18.

⁵ Ibid. (Originally, the PARC had three vice chairs, namely: the Secretaries of DAR, DA and DENR. Subsequently, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988 [Republic Act No. 6657] amended the composition of the PARC by reducing the vice chairs to one [DAR Secretary], and by removing the heads of the Department of Transportation and Communication [DOTC] and the PCGG, while adding that of the National Irrigation Administration [NIA]. It also specified that there will be three [3] representatives of affected landowners in the Council, to represent Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, and six [6] representatives of agrarian reform beneficiaries, two [2] each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, provided that one of them shall be from the cultural communities (indigenous peoples).

⁶ Republic Act No. 6657, otherwise known as the “Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988”, was passed by the Congress of the Philippines on June 7, 1988, and signed into law by President Corazon C. Aquino on June 10, 1988. It took effect on June 15, 1988, after the prescribed publication in newspapers of general circulation. It built upon and “legitimized” all previous proclamation and executive orders issued by the President pertaining to the implementation of the CARP prior to the 1987 revival of the Philippine legislature (which was closed down during the years of martial rule).

⁷ R.A. 6657, chapter VIII, Section 32 (Production-sharing).

⁸ DAR has received official development assistance (ODA) for support services from multilateral banks (World Bank, Asian Development Bank), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UN/FAO, the European Union (EU), and several individual foreign governments, including the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Australia, and Japan.

⁹ Chapter I, Section 2 (Declaration of Principles and Policies) of the CARL provides that: “The State shall 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.”

¹⁰ *Soliman, Tadem, Quizon, Abad, Santos, Serrano, Ramiro, jr., Castañeda, A Primer on Agrarian Reform, 1987.*

¹¹ DAR Special Order No. 982, s. 2006, dated 27 December 2006: “Creation of the *Sanggunian ng Mga Magsasakang Agraryo* (Consultative Council of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries)”, with the specific mandate to serve as the body for facilitating consultations and dialogues between DAR and CSOs.

¹² PARC ExCom Special Order No. 96-001, series of 1996: “Creation of the Audit Management and Investigation Committee (AMIC)”.

¹³ PARC ExCom Special Order No. 96-008, series of 1996: “Creation of an Ad Hoc Technical Working Group (TWG) under the PARC Audit Management and Investigation Committee (AMIC)”.

¹⁴ DAR Special Order No. 237, s. 2000, dated 14 March 2000: “Creation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Staff (MES) for the Foreign-Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO).”

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