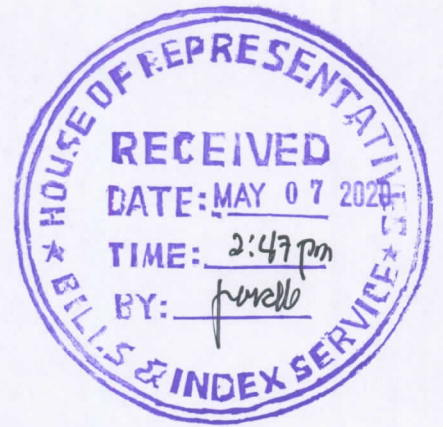


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6703



Introduced by Honorable Deogracias Victor 'DV' B. Savellano

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The current global pandemic brought about by the 2019 Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19), has placed the Philippines in a state of Public Health Emergency and State of Calamity under Presidential Proclamation Nos.292 and 299 series of 2020, respectively. The declarations were followed by a number of issuances in support to the same such as that of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) wherein the ECQ was implemented to contain the virus.

Given the current situation of the Philippines, it is evident as shown on various media platforms, that the dynamics of people and service delivery are being affected due to the restrictions set forth, thus leading to adverse effects on the local economy and other essential services.

In order to cope up with the situation, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has been formulating various interventions to continuously provide assistance to the Filipinos, particularly the stakeholders of the agriculture sector especially the agricultural farm workers including the landless farming families and smallholder farmers. Thus, the implementation of the Cash for Work (C4W) project is hereby proposed. C4W project is a short term intervention of the DA to provide temporary employment for agricultural workers in all applicable DA projects within the most affected communities of the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also hoped that it will entice people to go back to the provinces.

The C4W as a development approach not only discourages dependency but also preserves and improves human dignity and appreciation for work and helps pump-prime the local economy. Moreover, this project aligned with the agency's mission towards food security while ensuring continuous income for the small holder farmers and fisher folks, and poor farming families.

The ultimate goal here is to aid in the efforts of mitigating the impact of COVID-19 by ensuring basic food requirements of poor farming families and perhaps providing a permanent source of livelihood for the displaced workers.

The approval of this measure is then earnestly sought.

HON. DEOGRACIAS VICTOR "DV" B. SAVELLANO



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AN ACT

PROVIDING FOR A BALIK PROBINSIYA PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title-This Act shall be known as the "Balik Probinsiya Program Act."

SECTION 2. Objectives – This Act has a Cash For Work (C4W) Project that aims to sustain food production through the Department of Agriculture (DA) by refocusing the latter's projects and activities and at the same time augmenting the family income of agricultural workers. Specifically, the project shall provide temporary employment to agricultural farm workers in DA projects when applicable and accomplish deliverables of DA refocused projects or activities currently under implementation.

SECTION 3. Strategic Implementing Plans:

- A) Work and Financial Plans – All DA concerned Bureaus, Attached Agencies or Corporations and Regional Offices deemed as Implementing Agencies (IAs), shall identify activity/s and prepare Work and Financial Plans (WFP) for the proposed project. As part of the WFP, IAs may consider project proposals from Local Government Units (LGUs) and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) as IA's collaborators.
- B) C4W Activities – The following farming activities towards food production shall be conducted by the IAs to be supported by the C4W Project:
 - 1) Rehabilitation/Repair and Improvement of Agricultural Structures
 - 2) Farming Operations (Urban, Backyard & Livestock)
 - 3) Seedlings Production
 - 4) Planting Orchards and Forages
 - 5) Food, Fiber and Feed Processing

- C) Detailed Engineering Design and Cost Estimate – The Bureau of Agricultural and Fisheries Engineering (BAFE) and Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) shall assist the IAs in preparing the Detailed Engineering Design (DED) and Program of Works (POW) for submission to the Project Management Committee (PMC) for review and approval. Field inspection shall be conducted by the PMC with the concerned working committee of the IA, if necessary, to validate the proposed works under the project.
The Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED) of DA-Regional Field Offices (DA-RFOs), BAFE, and BSWM shall provide technical assistance to the IAs upon submission of request.
- D) Monitoring and Evaluation – Part of the review process that shall be done by the PMC is the conduct of regular monitoring and evaluation of the activities undertaken by the IA. The latter shall then coordinate with PMC and arrange the schedule for the monitoring and evaluation of the project. In addition, IAs shall organize a team to document and assess the impact of the project through an External Evaluation Committee (EEC) to be organized by the Office of the Secretary with a maximum of five (5) members from the academe, private sector, business sector, LGU and a professional organization. Results of the evaluation shall be used as basis for possible expansion of the project, institutionalizing C4W projects among DA attached agencies and bureaus, and improvement of the project implementing guidelines.
- E) Cost of Works – IAs shall include in the WFP the detailed estimate for labor and material requirements. Labor cost shall cover 60-80% of the total cost of works while the remaining 20-40% will be allocated for materials. Cost of labor is much higher than the usual cost estimate of any engineering construction works because providing jobs to the project beneficiaries is the main objective and priority of C4W project. In case of involving cooperators or recipients of the projects (e.g. development of agricultural structure), cooperators will shoulder forty percent (40%) of the construction materials needed.
- F) Beneficiaries – IAs shall be responsible in identifying beneficiaries of the project and be guided with the set criteria as follows:
- 1) Those that are not currently working for the IAs but displaced workers of IAs can be considered as beneficiaries of the project.
 - 2) LGU recommended beneficiaries with supporting documents like valid personal identification, barangay clearance and certification from the barangay that the recommended beneficiary/s have met the minimum qualifications to wit:
 - a. Landless farm workers (men and women)
 - b. Skilled farm workers
 - c. Out-of-school youth farm workers (at least 18 years of age)
 - d. Food processors
 - e. Small-holder farmers (tilling 1 ha & below) who lost their crop and/or livestock and did not gain income due to natural damages.
 - 3) Beneficiaries coming from the poor and the most affected communities by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Agricultural workers to be hired for the foregoing activities shall be given wages based on the minimum wage set by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). However, skilled workers such as masons, carpenters, painters, agricultural machinery operators, mechanics or technicians, among others shall be given higher compensation based on their competencies. Hired workers for this project shall be under a Job Order arrangement, with the contract signing to be done before the commencement of the works. Releasing of wages of the workers shall be facilitated by the IAs and be given on a weekly basis through the payroll system.

SECTION 4. Project Management - The project shall be managed by a Project Director (PD) to be designated by the DA Secretary. Technical & support staff under the Office of the PD shall be hired to manage the implementation and execution of the project activities. A Project Management Committee (PMC) at the national level shall be organized to review the implementation and shall recommend the necessary actions for approval by the Secretary. PMC shall be chaired by the assigned PD, while the Vice-Chairperson shall be the BAFE Director or his authorized representative. Members of the PMC are representatives from BSWM, National Meat Inspection Services (NMIS), Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), Policy and Regulation Services (PRS), Field Operation Services (FOS), and Finance Services (FS). Special Orders will be issued by the Secretary to all designees with the term of reference.

Working committees which will be composed of technical and support staff shall be organized by IAs to manage, implement, monitor, supervise and evaluate activities under the approved WFP.

SECTION 5.- Cash Investment Cycle thru the 3Gs Project – 3Gs is a calling program amid the COVID 19 pandemic with the goal to sustain safe, accessible and affordable meat production in the rural areas during the health crisis and beyond. The 3Gs consist of Growing Animal Packages which are:

- a) Grow 1 Package: Long Term – grow 3 heads of goats or sheep
- b) Grow 2 Package: Medium Term – grow 2 heads of pigs
- c) Grow 3 Package: Short Term – grow 150 heads of broiler – 15k

Those who are qualified for the 3Gs are farming families with an average gross income of Php 100,000 or less annually within the 2 past cropping seasons and landless farming families. Capital will be provided in a 4 year period and can be paid after 5 years.

SECTION 6. Appropriations-The DA Secretary shall include in their Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DA.

SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DA, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this law.

SECTION 8. **Separability Clause** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. **Repealing Clause** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. **Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,