

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila

Thirteenth Congress

Third Regular Session



Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-fourth day of July, two thousand six.

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. **9418**]

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A STRATEGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT, STRENGTHENING VOLUNTEERISM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* — This Act shall be known and cited as the "Volunteer Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It shall be the policy of the State to promote the participation of the various sectors of the Filipino society, and as necessary, international and foreign volunteer organizations in public and civic affairs, and adopt and

strengthen the practice of volunteerism as a strategy in order to attain national development and international understanding. The inculcation of volunteerism as a way of life shall rekindle in every Filipino the time-honored tradition of bayanihan to foster social justice, solidarity and sustainable development.

SEC. 3. *Statement of Goals and Objectives.* – To carry out the foregoing policy, the government shall pursue the attainment of the following goals and objectives:

(a) To provide a policy framework on volunteerism that shall underscore the fundamental principles necessary to harness and harmonize the broad and diverse efforts of the voluntary sector in the country into an integrative and effective partnership for local and national development as well as international cooperation and understanding;

(b) To provide a conducive and enabling environment for volunteers and volunteer service organizations by setting mechanisms to protect volunteers' rights and privileges and give due recognition to highlight their roles and contributions to society; and

(c) To provide an effective institutional mechanism to strengthen the role of the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) to perform its mandates and to oversee the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following shall mean:

(a) "Volunteerism" refers to an act involving a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and developmental interventions that provides an enabling and empowering environment both on the part of the beneficiary receiving and the volunteer rendering the act, undertaken for reasons arising from sociodevelopmental, business or corporate orientation, commitment or conviction for the attainment of the

public good and where monetary and other incentives or reward are not the primary motivating factors.

(b) "Volunteer" refers to an individual or group who for reasons arising from their sociodevelopmental, business and corporate orientation, commitment or conviction, contribute time, service and resources whether on full- time or part-time basis to a just and essential social development cause, mission or endeavor in the belief that their activity is mutually meaningful and beneficial to public interest as well as to themselves.

(c) "Volunteer service organization" refers to a local or foreign group that recruits, trains, deploys and supports volunteer workers to programs and projects implemented by them or by other organizations or any group that provides services and resources, including but not limited to, information, capability building, advocacy and networking for the attainment of the common good.

(d) "Voluntary sector" refers to those sectors of Philippine society that organizes themselves into volunteers to take advocacy and action primarily for local and national development as well as international cooperation and understanding.

SEC. 5. Role and Modalities of Volunteerism in the Private Sector. --

(a) Volunteerism in the academe includes, but is not limited to, provision of technical assistance and sharing of technology within the academic circle, target communities and other clienteles and the upgrading of the quality of education and curriculum methodologies while providing career enhancement and exposure to the volunteers;

(b) Volunteerism in the corporate sector as an expression of corporate social responsibility and citizenship, refers to activities recognized by the company, where employees give their time, skills and resources in the service of the company's internal and/or external communities. These volunteering activities

include, but are not limited to, employee giving of material resources to specific causes; employee-led fund-raising; one-time outreach activities; environmental campaign; medical and health-related advocacies; knowledge and change management; scholarship programs; and sharing of expertise, particularly of business and developmental skills through mentoring, tutoring, training, business, consulting/advising and rendering of *pro bono* services on a case-to-case basis; and

(c) Volunteerism by not-for-profit organizations includes, but is not limited to, provision of complementary service delivery and human resource development in underserved communities as well as advocacy and articulation of the cause of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

SEC. 6. *Role and Modalities of Volunteerism by Foreign Volunteer Organizations.* – Volunteerism by foreign volunteer organizations includes, but is not limited to, provision of technical assistance not locally accessible in priority development areas within the framework of technical cooperation and sociocultural exchange.

SEC. 7. *Role of the Government.* – The government shall coordinate, facilitate and encourage the participation of the voluntary sector in the promotion, utilization and recognition of volunteerism in national development and international cooperation. This shall be achieved through the provision of enabling and conducive environment for volunteer work.

SEC. 8. *The Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA).* – The PNVSCA created by Executive Order No. 134, as amended, shall undertake the implementation and execution of the provisions of this Act

SEC. 9. *Mandates of the PNVSCA.* – The PNVSCA shall have the following functions:

(a) Review and formulate policies and guidelines concerning the national volunteer service program consistent with national development priorities;

(b) Coordinate, monitor and evaluate the national volunteer service program in order that volunteer assistance may fit into the total national development goals;

(c) Act as clearing house for matters pertaining to international volunteer services;

(d) Develop and implement prototypes and models of *volunteering for adoption by institutions and communities*;

(e) Provide technical services and support for capability building of volunteers and volunteer organizations;

(f) Undertake advocacy for the promotion and recognition of volunteerism as a tool for development;

(g) Establish and maintain a national network of volunteer organizations and serve as liaison between and among local and foreign governmental private voluntary organizations including the United Nations Volunteers (UNV); and

(h) Administer all the PNVSCA funds from all sources including foreign aid in accordance with accounting and auditing requirements.

For this purpose, the executive director of the PNVSCA shall submit an organizational plan upon advice of the MultiSectoral Advisory Body to the Department of Budget and Management.

SEC. 10. *The MultiSectoral Advisory Body (MSAB).* – To assist the PNVSCA, the Body created under Executive Order No. 635 shall be reconstituted with the following members:

- (a) The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
 - (b) The Department of Education (DepED);
 - (c) The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA);
 - (d) The Department of Justice (DOJ),
 - (e) The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
 - (f) The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);
 - (g) The Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
 - (h) The Presidential Management Staff (PMS), Office of the President;
 - (i) The Representative/s from the corporate sector;
 - (j) The Representative/s from the private academe sector;
- and
- (k) The Representative/s from the not-for-profit sector

All member government agencies shall be represented at least by an assistant secretary while the private sector agencies shall be represented at least by their highest executive officers. The government agencies shall be permanent members while the representatives from the private sector shall serve for a two-year term. The chair of the MSAB shall be elected from among the members of the body. The PNVSCA executive director, being an *ex officio* member, shall serve as the permanent vice chair.

The MSAB may call on representatives of other government agencies and/or the private sector to serve as resource person/s on volunteerism as the need arises.

SEC. 11. *Functions of the MSAB.* – The MSAB shall have the following functions:

- (a) Provide advice in the formulation of policies and guidelines for the national volunteer service program;
- (b) Provide consultative and technical advisory services on volunteer matters; and
- (c) Serve as a forum to enhance and strengthen linkages between and among volunteer groups and communities.

SEC. 12. *Special Provisions.* –

(a) *Establishment of a National Volunteer Infrastructure and Forum.* – The PNVSCA shall develop and establish a system of national registration and networking to improve coordination of volunteers and volunteer service organizations to widen horizon for sharing and complementing information, experiences and resources.

(b) *Integration of Volunteerism in the Basic and Higher Education Curriculum.* – The DepEd and the CHED shall integrate volunteerism as part of the curriculum in basic and higher education to raise the consciousness of the youth and develop the culture of volunteerism among the citizenry.

(c) *Establishment of Volunteer Program in National Government Agencies and Local Government Units (LGUs).* – National government agencies and LGUs shall establish volunteer programs in their respective offices to promote and encourage volunteering in government programs and projects as well as enjoin government employees to render volunteer service in social, economic and humanitarian development undertakings in the community.

(d) *Recognition and Incentives to Volunteers.* – Government agencies and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) implementing volunteer programs are encouraged to develop and provide volunteers recognition and incentive package which may include, but not limited to allowance, insurance, training and the grant of privileges and status to Filipino overseas volunteers at par with Filipino overseas workers.

(e) *Visa Privileges for Foreign Volunteers.* – Foreign volunteers approved for assignment by the PNVSCA as well as their legal dependents may be entitled to 47 (a) (2) visa with multiple entry privileges and corresponding exemption from visa and immigration fees and other related processing/application fees or charges. Foreign nationals already in the Philippines who have been approved for volunteer assignment by the PNVSCA may avail of the above visa category and privileges upon endorsement by the PNVSCA to the DOJ.

SEC. 13. *Institutional Mechanism for Research, Documentation, Recognition and Modeling of Best Volunteer Practices.* – To carry out the purposes of this Act, an institutional mechanism shall be established, to be spearheaded and administered by the PNVSCA, for continuing research, documentation, recognition and modeling of best volunteer practices as an important component of implementing development programs and projects and undertaking humanitarian activities. For this purpose, the PNVSCA in consultation with any and all relevant government agencies, NGOs, private institutions and persons shall effect the setting up of the mechanism as well as determine all requirements and, or necessary acts to ensure its effective implementation.


SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The PNVSCA, with advice from the MSAB, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or


inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, including Section 12 of Executive Order No. 635 are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,




MANNY VILLAR
President of the Senate

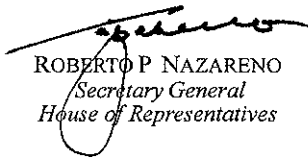


JOSE DE VENECIA SR.
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This Act which originated in the House of Representatives was finally passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on April 5, 2006 and February 5, 2007, respectively.




OSCAR G. YABES
Secretary of the Senate



ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General House of Representatives

Approved: APR 10 2007



GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Philippines

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