

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )



'15 AUG 18 AM 10:05

SENATE  
S.B. No. 2903

RECEIVED BY: *J*

---

Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

---

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

**Explanatory Note**

It is our directive to ensure that as the Philippine economy grows and thrives, all Filipinos grow and thrive together. One of our mandates is to promote inclusive growth and spread wealth and opportunity across the country.

As such, we need to take a look at our rural communities and provide opportunities to those along the countryside and within our islands, beginning with our least fortunate countrymen.

Considering that almost 80% of Filipinos living in poverty reside in our rural areas<sup>1</sup>, we are in urgent need of measures to combat poverty and unemployment beyond our cities and urban hubs in the short and long term.

The Rural Employment Assistance Program (REAP) Act of 2015 is one such policy for the short term, which aims to provide heads of poor families in rural areas fair wages for temporary unskilled work.

This bill not only addresses the issue of unemployment in rural areas, it also involves our less fortunate citizens in nation building as we provide other measures that will help them pursue permanent employment.

The REAP Act of 2015 mandates the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to hire unemployed Filipinos to maintain, build, and rehabilitate shared, public facilities and livelihood assets within their community.

Let us bring opportunities, wealth, and capacity to the Philippine islands, especially in the countryside. Let every Filipino reap the fruits of our positive progress and development.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

*Bam Aquino*  
Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/home/tags/philippines>

15 AUG 18 A11:05

SENATE  
S.B. No. 2903

RECEIVED BY: 

---

Introduced by Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

---

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 SECTION 1. **Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Rural Employment Assistance Program*  
2 *Act*"

3 SECTION 2. **Declaration of Policy.** - It is the declared policy of the State to promote a just and  
4 dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people  
5 from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising  
6 standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide  
7 employment assistance to a qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in rural  
8 areas identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the  
9 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

10 SECTION 3. **Rural Employment Assistance Program.** - The DSWD shall implement the Rural  
11 Employment Assistance Program, hereinafter referred to as "*the Program*," in coordination with local  
12 government units. The Program shall provide temporary employment to every qualified head of family  
13 or single adult member of poor families in rural areas who volunteer/s to do unskilled manual work for a  
14 minimum of forty-five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in every calendar year.

15 Rural areas refer to barangays which have population size of less than two thousand five  
16 hundred (2,500). Barangays which do not have an establishment with twenty-five (25) or more  
17 employees, or five (5) or more establishments with a minimum of ten (10) employees, or five (5) or  
18 more facilities within the two kilometer radius from the barangay hall, are also classified as rural areas.

19 SECTION 4. **Assessment to Determine Qualification for Availment of Employment Assistance.** -  
20 The DSWD, in close coordination with the local government units and other concerned government  
21 agencies, shall conduct an assessment of all poor individuals and families in rural areas who signified

1 interest to do unskilled labor to determine eligibility in availing of the Employment Assistance Program.

2 For the purpose of this Act, the poor shall refer to individuals and families whose income fall  
3 below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner  
4 to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities  
5 of life or those who have been identified as poor by the National Household Targeting System for  
6 Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR).

7 **SECTION 5. *Rate of Assistance.*** - Every qualified head of family or single adult member of a poor  
8 family in the rural areas who qualified under the Program shall be entitled to receive for each day of  
9 work an employment assistance equal to the applicable minimum wage set by the Regional Tripartite  
10 Wages and Productivity Board in the region. They shall also be entitled to the payment mandatory social  
11 security dues such as Philhealth, Pag-ibig and Social Security System (SSS).

12 **SECTION 6. *Types of Works and Activities.*** - The DSWD, in coordination with the local  
13 government units and other concerned government agencies, shall take the lead in the implementation  
14 of the Rural Employment Assistance Program along project identification, implementation and  
15 monitoring of the works and activities. The works and activities for this purpose are classified as  
16 activities that will mobilize eligible poor individuals and families to finish a project in a given period.  
17 These projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

18 a. Development, re-building/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets destroyed or lost  
19 due to natural disasters (e.g. desilting of irrigation canals, development of paddy dikes, rehabilitation of  
20 water impounding, among others);

21 b. Rehabilitation and or development of common service facilities, which are being shared  
22 and used by poor families as production or consolidation centers/units (e.g. post-harvest facilities, public  
23 markets etc.);

24 c. Development or rehabilitation of physical assets to open up access to natural assets  
25 where the former is necessary to bring out the products of poor families to the market (e.g. farm to  
26 market road, slope protection, bridges, among others); and

27 d. Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures such as mangrove  
28 planting/rehabilitation, tree planting and the likes.

1           SECTION 7. **Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the implementation of the Rural  
2 Employment Assistance Program shall be included in the budget of the DSWD in the annual General  
3 Appropriations Act.

4           The DSWD may also get funds, donations and other forms of financial support from foreign and  
5 local organizations, institutions and governments for the implementation of Rural Employment  
6 Assistance Program.

7           SECTION 8. **Employment Assistance and Skills Training Fund (EASTF).** – There is hereby created  
8 an Employment Assistance and Skills Training Fund (EASTF) which shall be administered by the DSWD.  
9 The EASTF shall be exclusively for the benefit of the qualified head of family or single adult member of  
10 poor family in the rural areas who availed of the Program.

11           The EASTF shall be used to pay the wages and skills training programs of qualified head/s of  
12 families or single adult member/s of the poor families in rural areas who availed of the Program.

13           SECTION 9. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within ninety (90) days after the approval of  
14 this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall, in consultation with  
15 the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government, issue the necessary rules and  
16 regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

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

19 Approved.