

THE SEMI-FEDERAL ALTERNATIVE

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This is a presentation of the concept of a regional government authority, that is empowered to plan and implement an integrated area development and administration program. By combining centralized law-making with decentralized law-implementation, the concept constitutes a semi-federal alternative in the pursuit of structural reforms.

Regional Government Authority Concept

The concept of an alternative institutional arrangement is centered on a regional administrative authority, tasked principally to provide integrated social and economic services at the regional level.

It will institutionalize the integration of the social and economic service functions of selected national line departments, their attached agencies and related special agencies, by centralizing the administrative control and supervision over the regional offices of the said line departments and agencies under the regional administrative authority.

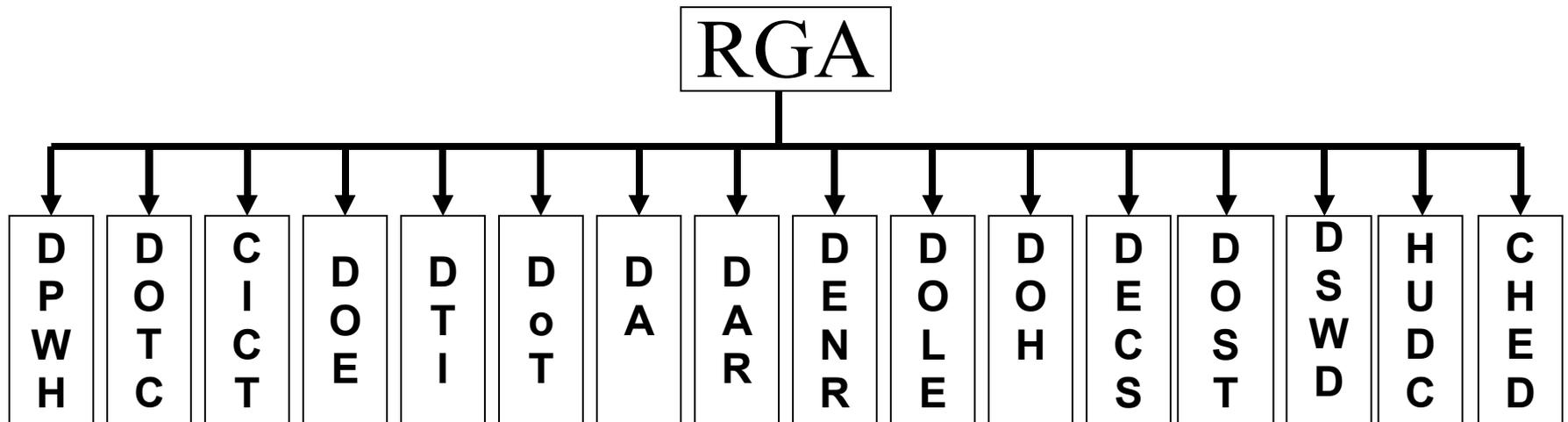
It will be a national government agency created from the consolidation or merger of the existing regional offices of the selected line departments, attached agencies and related special agencies, with social and economic service functions. It will not be a political subdivision or local government unit, which requires for its creation the affirmative vote of the local residents under a plebiscite.

It will be an administrative authority, and not a development authority, because it will be permanent in status. It will continue to discharge national government functions, even after the completion of development projects.

It will be under the Office of the President, and not under any line Department, because it will be a consolidation of the regional offices of the various line agencies. It will be subject to the control and supervision of the President. It will discharge its functions in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations issued by the respective Department Secretaries.

It will have a separate and distinct corporate personality by virtue of a special charter. This is to provide the entity with juridical capacity to conduct government business with other national agencies, local government units, international organizations, financial institutions, private sector groups, and the general public.

The regional offices proposed to be covered will be those of the following: Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Tourism (DoT), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Housing and Urban Development Council (HUDC). The regional offices of the agencies attached to the cited line departments, and other special agencies performing related functions will also be covered.



Proposed to be excluded from the consolidated framework will be regional offices and attached agencies of the following: Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

The inclusion or exclusion, in whole or in part, of the regional offices of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Regional Development Council (RDC), is recommended to be subject further study.

The alternative institutional framework aims to achieve the systematic integration of social and economic service functions at the regional level, as well as the systematic delineation of functions between the regional and national government institutions.

Management of the Regional Government Authority

The regional administrative authority will be run by a board of trustees. The Chairman/Chief Executive of the authority will be appointed by the President. The Secretaries of the line departments affected directly will be ex-officio voting members of the Board. The Secretaries of the line departments not affected directly will be ex-officio non-voting members of the Board. The chief executives of local government units within the area of operations will be ex-officio non-voting members of the Board.

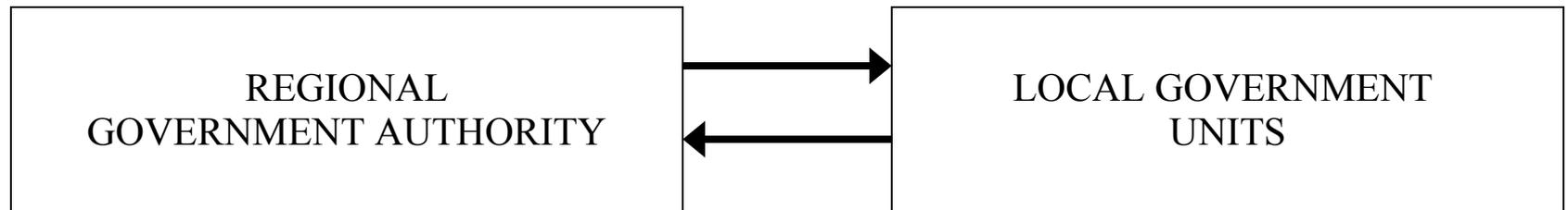
Regional Government Authority

Board of Trustees

- Chairman/Chief Executive appointed by the President
- Secretaries of Selected Departments as Voting Ex-Officio Members
- Secretaries of Other Departments as Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members
- Local Chief Executives as Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members

Relationship with Local Government Units

The regional administrative authority, being a national government agency providing national government services at the regional level, will co-exist with the autonomous local government units located in the area of operations, and complement their provision of local government services.



Alternative to the Davao Gulf Development Authority Concept

The regional administrative authority concept differs from the Davao Gulf Development Authority (DGDA) concept of the Davao Integrated Development Program (DIDP) as follows:

- The DGDA co-exists with, performs the same functions, and operates in the same area as, the regional offices of selected national line departments involved in the delivery of social and economic services.
- The RGA absorbs and assumes full control and supervision over the regional offices of selected national line departments involved in the delivery of social and economic services.
- The DGDA requires substantial additional funding for its own operations, apart from the ongoing operations of existing regional officers of selected national line departments.
- The RGA requires only nominal additional funding for the operations of the governing board and the secretariat.

DAVAO GULF DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DGDA

**(Duplicates functions of
the Regional Offices of
Selected Line Departments
and attached Agencies
of the National Government)**

**REGIONAL OFFICE/S
(of Selected Line Departments
and attached Agencies
of the National Government)**

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

RAA

(Board/Secretariat)



**REGIONAL OFFICE/S
(of Selected Line Departments
and attached Agencies
of the National Government)**

Alternative to the Federal Government Concept and the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao Concept

The regional administrative authority concept adopts the advantageous features of the federal government system and the ARMM system, and at the same time retains the primary advantageous feature of our present unitary government system.

The advantageous features adopted are as follows:

- integrated delivery of government services at the regional level; and
- budgeting on regional basis.

The advantageous feature retained is as follows:

- simplified application of uniform laws in all regions throughout the entire national territory.

The concept merely requires Congressional legislation to provide for the institutional integration of the national executive government offices at the regional level. It does not involve the constitutional process of establishing sovereign Component states. Neither does it involve the creation of a municipal corporation or political subdivision (local government unit) at the regional level, which requires the affirmative vote of the local residents under a plebiscite.

Comparative Study with other Legal Systems

In connection with the drafting of a statutory law creating the proposed regional government authority, a comparative study of the Philippine experience on regional governance is recommended. The study may cover the following Philippine entities:

- Metropolitan Manila Development Authority,
- Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao
- Southern Philippines Development Authority
- Regional Development Council
- Bases Conversion Development Authority
- Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority
- Clark Development Corporation
- John Hay Poro Point Development Corporation.

To complement the study on existing Philippine regional entities, a comparative study may also be conducted on the experience of the component States of California and New York, prefecture system of Tokyo, and the special administrative region system of China.

Two-Step Process of Structural Reforms in Governance

To ensure the successful implementation of structural reforms in regional governance, a 2-step process is recommended:

- Step1: preparation and drafting of a statutory law which will establish the regional government authority;
- Step2: conduct of an information, education and communications campaign to promote public awareness of the need to integrate and consolidate government functions at the regional level, and strengthen the political will to carry out the required structural reforms.