



Republic of the Philippines
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY PARLIAMENT
Bangsamoro Government Center, Cotabato City



FOURTH REGULAR SESSION

BANGSAMORO AUTONOMY ACT NO. 81

Begun and held in Cotabato City, on Thursday, the 15th day of September 2022.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING THE SALAMAT EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, AND ALLOCATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE SALAMAT EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

Be it enacted by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament in session assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “*The Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership Act of 2025.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the Bangsamoro Government to recognize and institutionalize exemplary leadership in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) that embodies moral governance, accountability, and inclusive development. Consistent with this basic policy, the Bangsamoro Government hereby establishes the Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership (SEAL) Program to honor outstanding leaders who exemplify the Bangsamoro’s aspirations for self-determination, peace, and progress.

SEC. 3. *The Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership.* – The SEAL is the highest leadership award, incentive, honor, and recognition-based program for all leaders in the BARMM, and is a continuing commitment for leaders to continually progress and improve their leadership in the following domains:

- a) ***Accountable Leadership*** – the awardee must demonstrate the capacity to embody the principle of accountable leadership by strictly adhering to law, thoughtfully considering the ethical and moral dimensions of decision-making, and being willing to accept the consequences of those decisions and actions. This principle applies to all leaders or any local leaders who show extraordinary public service and consistently demonstrate moral behavior by adhering to the principles of transparency, honesty, accountability, integrity, vicegerency, flexibility, moderation, and righteousness;
- b) ***Participatory Leadership*** – the awardee should value the principle of participation in the decision-making process. This entails strengthening special bodies, adhering compliance to disclosure policy, and fostering community involvement and empowerment. The leader

should exhibit the ability to inspire others to bring in new ideas, engage inclusively with stakeholders in co-creating decisions and solutions, and build trust and tap the fullest potential among his/her diverse stakeholders. This includes ensuring that stakeholders actively collaborate and contribute to effective and efficient problem-solving in the community. Further, this domain refers to a leader who demonstrates extraordinary public service and consistent moral behavior guided by principles of participation, justness, fairness and equity, consultation, consensus building, inclusiveness, and gender sensitivity; and

- c) ***Service-Oriented Leadership*** – the awardee must demonstrate significant verifiable results on the primacy of the common good through decision-making and effectively fulfill his/her responsibilities in providing essential services to his/her constituents. This includes establishing accessible frontline services for clients. This domain also refers to a leader who exemplifies extraordinary public service and consistent moral behavior based on principles of efficiency, effectiveness, general welfare, responsiveness, justice, fairness, equity, and delivering excellent service to his/her people.

SEC. 4. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a) ***“First Level Assessment”*** – refers to the initial screening and verification phase conducted by the Technical Working Group (TWG) under the SEAL Program. It serves as the first formal evaluation stage, ensuring that candidates meet basic eligibility criteria and submit complete, compliant documentation.
- b) ***“Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership Awardee”*** – refers to the leader who receives the SEAL Award as determined by the Selection Committee after going through the Third Level Assessment.
- c) ***“Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership Awardee Candidate”*** – refers to the leader who was nominated for the SEAL by the Validation Team after going through the Second Level Assessment.
- d) ***“Salamat Excellence Award for Leadership Awardee Endowment Fund”*** – refers to the Shari'ah-compliant and/or in accordance with the principles of Islamic financing investment fund established for the incentivization of the SEAL Awardee.
- e) ***“Second Level Assessment”*** – refers to the rigorous evaluation phase conducted by the Validation Team under the SEAL Program, involving onsite verification and scoring based on leadership competencies. It ensures that candidates not only meet documentary requirements but also demonstrate authentic leadership achievements aligned with the program's standards.
- f) ***“Selection Committee”*** – refers to the final decision-making body under the SEAL Program, tasked with evaluating validated candidates and selecting the most outstanding awardee based on merit, leadership qualities, and compliance with program criteria. It ensures a fair, transparent, and rigorous selection process through review, interviews, and deliberation.
- g) ***“Technical Working Group”*** – refers to a specialized body established within the Ministry of Interior and Local Government (MILG) under its Operations Management Service,

tasked with implementing the SEAL Program. The TWG serves as the operational arm responsible for ensuring the effective execution of the program through coordination, assessment, validation, and documentation processes.

- h) *"Third Level Assessment"* – refers to the final evaluation stage of the SEAL Program, conducted by the Selection Committee to determine the most outstanding candidate through in-depth interviews and holistic leadership evaluation. This phase focuses on assessing a candidate's ability to articulate their leadership philosophy, achievements, and alignment with the SEAL Program's core values.
- i) *"Validation Team"* – refers to a special body responsible for conducting a rigorous, second-level evaluation of candidates under the SEAL Program. Its primary role is to verify, authenticate, and assess the qualifications and accomplishments of applicants through document reviews, onsite validations, and stakeholder consultations, ensuring transparency and credibility in the selection process.

SEC. 5. The Technical Working Group. – There is hereby created a TWG within the MILG, under the Operations Management Service, to implement the SEAL Program. The TWG shall have the following duties and functions:

- a) Provide Information, Education, and Communication materials regarding the SEAL program;
- b) Facilitate the creation and revision of the tools, criteria, rules, and guidelines for the validation and selection process of the program;
- c) The Provincial Focal Person shall receive applications and endorse them to the regional office;
- d) Review application documents and other materials submitted for completeness and compliance with the provided formats;
- e) Conduct First Level Assessment to verify candidates and, if necessary, secure additional relevant documents to validate the authenticity of the submitted application materials;
- f) Initiate coordination and convene the Validation Team and Selection Committee for the implementation of pertinent activities: Transforming Governance, Empowering the Bangsamoro;
- g) Present and endorse the application documents for eligible and qualified candidates to the Validation Team;
- h) Assist the Validation Team in the onsite validation and assessment of candidates;
- i) Assist the Selection Committee in the final assessment of the candidates and serve as the Secretariat during the deliberations;

- j) Maintain a database of the results of assessments for shortlisting and final selection;
- k) Prepare a Terminal Report on the procedures conducted by the Validation Team and Selection Committee;
- l) Organize the official awarding ceremony; and
- m) Prepare other necessary documents required throughout the entire selection process.

SEC. 6. *The Validation Team.* – There shall be established a Validation Team composed of the Director II for Operations Management Services of the MILG as Chairperson, along with representatives from the following partner ministries, offices, agencies, and other organizations or institutions as members:

- a) Technical representatives from the different ministries in the Bangsamoro Government with a rank of at least Division Chief;
- b) MILG Focal Person for Search for Model Barangay;
- c) The Dean of the College of Public Affairs–Public Administration of Mindanao State University–Main Campus;
- d) Two (2) representatives from the Civil Society Organization or institutions (CSOs);
- e) Two (2) representatives from the Health Sector;
- f) Two (2) representatives from the Women Sector;
- g) Two (2) representatives from the Youth Sector;
- h) Two (2) representatives from the Business Sector;
- i) Two (2) representatives from the Religious Sector;
- j) One (1) representative from the Academe;
- k) Two (2) representatives from the Indigenous Peoples Affairs; and
- l) Two (2) representatives from the Persons with Disability.

SEC. 7. *Duties and Functions of the Validation Team.* – The following duties and functions shall be executed by the Validation Team:

- a) Review the application documents;

- b) Conduct a Second Level Assessment to verify and validate the application documents, including the authenticity of candidates' accomplishments through onsite visits and interviews with stakeholders and the community;
- c) Convene to shortlist qualified candidates;
- d) Deliberate on the findings and recommendations for the shortlisted candidates;
- e) Prepare a presentation of reports that include the shortlist, factual observations, and recommendations;
- f) Have the designated representative of the member Validation Team sign the minutes of the meeting or terminal report drafted by the TWG, along with the assessment forms used during the shortlisting process; and
- g) Present the reports to the Selection Committee.

SEC. 8. *The Selection Committee.* – Candidates for SEAL will be elevated to the Selection Committee for further validation and assessment, which shall be composed of the following:

- a) Chairperson: Senior Minister of the Office of the Chief Minister
- b) Co-Chairperson: Minister of the MILG
- c) Vice-Chairperson: Bangsamoro Director General of the MILG
- d) Members:
 - i. Chairperson of the Committee on Local Governance of the Bangsamoro Parliament;
 - ii. The Grand Mufti of Regional *Darul-Ifta'*;
 - iii. The Dean of the College of Public Affairs–Public Administration of Mindanao State University–Main Campus;
 - iv. One (1) representative from a Non-governmental Organization or institution focusing on leadership and governance;
 - v. One (1) representative from the Chamber of Commerce;
 - vi. Three (3) representatives from CSO or institution focusing on leadership and governance; and
 - vii. Director II of the Operations Management Services of the MILG.

SEC. 9. *Duties and Functions of the Selection Committee.* – The following duties and functions shall be executed by the Selection Committee to select one (1) SEAL Awardee for the current year:

- a) Review the validation results conducted by the Validation Team;
- b) Conduct final interviews with the shortlisted, eligible, and qualified candidates resulting from the Second Level Assessment by the Validation Team. Interviews will focus on the SEAL Leadership Framework, assessing candidates' abilities to effectively articulate their views on leadership and their accomplishments;
- c) Have a designated representative from the RSC actively participate in the Third Level Assessment to ensure the successful, comprehensive, and holistic implementation of the SEAL Program;
- d) Sign the minutes of the meeting or terminal report drafted by the TWG and the assessment forms used during the selection process; and
- e) Convene, select, and deliberate on the findings and recommendations of the assessment to declare the awardees of the SEAL Program through secret voting.

SEC. 10. *Minimum Qualification for Nomination.* – No leader shall be qualified for nomination unless the nominee meets the following eligibilities:

- a) Must have exhibited good moral character;
- b) Must not have any pending civil, criminal, or administrative case;
- c) Must not have been adjudged guilty or liable in any criminal, or administrative case; and
- d) Must not have previously conferred with the SEAL.

SEC. 11. *Documentary Requirements for Nomination.* – The MILG, as the implementing ministry of this program, shall determine the documentary requirements for purposes of qualification to the SEAL.

SEC. 12. *Selection Process.* – No leader shall be conferred with the SEAL unless it has undergone the three (3) levels of assessment, which are undertaken as follows:

- a) First Level Assessment – the TWG shall conduct the initial assessment and validation of the candidates. The MILG shall adopt a mechanism for the conduct of initial assessment and validation. The rating acquired by the candidate during the first level assessment shall form part of his/her overall rating, which is equivalent to ten percent (10%) of his/her final score.
- b) Second Level Assessment – onsite validation shall be conducted by the Validation Team to validate the authenticity and truthfulness of the submitted documents. Subsequently, the Validation Team will convene to deliberate the findings from the onsite validation, and each member will rate the candidate using an Assessment Tool based on the three Leadership Domains of SEAL.

To qualify for the shortlist and proceed to the next level of assessment, a candidate must:

- i. Pass all three (3) SEAL Leadership Domains with a minimum score of seventy-five percent (75%) of the total score in each domain;
 - ii. Shall have an overall or total score of at least eighty percent (80%) on this level of assessment; and
 - iii. Have passed all the qualification requirements enumerated herein above. The rating acquired by the candidate on the second level assessment shall form part of his/her overall rating, which is equivalent to sixty percent (60%) of his/her final score.
- c) Third Level Assessment – the Selection Committee shall conduct the Third Level Assessment, which includes the Final Interview and Selection of candidates. During this assessment, the Selection Committee shall interview each candidate and evaluate their performance based on the SEAL Three Leadership Domains using the Final Assessment Tool. Each of the three leadership domains shall carry equal weight, totaling one hundred percent (100%) for the assessment. The final rating for each candidate will be the average of the scores in each domain, and this will contribute forty percent (40%) to the candidate's overall rating.

The overall rating is calculated using the following formula:

Overall Rating of the Candidate = First Level Assessment Rating ten percent (10%) + Second Level Assessment Rating sixty percent (60%) + Third Level Assessment Rating thirty percent (30%).

The candidate or nominee who shall garner the highest rating shall be selected as the SEAL awardee. In cases of a tie, the Selection Committee shall resolve it through a vote during its deliberation.

SEC. 13. No Awardee. – In the event that no qualified or eligible nominee passes the Third Level Assessment, the Selection Committee shall declare no awardee for the given fiscal year. *Provided*, That the award fund shall be retained in the Special SEAL Fund account reserved for the next cycle of assessment, or the BTO may opt to invest it in the manner provided under Section 17 of this Act.

SEC. 14. SEAL Incentive. – A leader, which, according to the assessment of the Selection Committee, complies, qualifies, passes all assessment level as provided under Section 12 of this Act, and ranks first among the shortlisted nominees, shall be conferred and awarded the SEAL medallion worth Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (PHP500,000.00) and a grant of Twenty Million Pesos (PHP20,000,000.00) to the local government unit (LGU) or organization or institution of awardee's representation.

SEC. 15. SEAL Endowment Fund. – An endowment fund, hereinafter to be known as the SEAL Endowment Fund, is hereby exclusively established to be managed by the Bangsamoro Treasury Office (BTO), which shall be the trustee of the said Fund. An amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (PHP 500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as the seed capital for the SEAL Endowment Fund.

For purposes of this Act, a special account called "*Special SEAL Fund*" is hereby established, which shall serve as a depository account for the seed capital and realized profits of the SEAL

Endowment Fund. The Fund shall be exclusively utilized to pay out incentives granted to SEAL awardee and the latter's LGU or organization, or institution.

SEC. 16. *Utilization and, Limitation on Expenditure of the Incentives Under the SEAL Endowment Fund.* – In case the awardee is a leader representing an LGU, the use of the incentives paid out of the SEAL Endowment Fund under Section 14 of this Act shall be governed by the policies governing the utilization of the twenty percent (20%) of the annual National Tax Allotment for local development projects, the Annual Investment Program and the Local Development Investment Program.

In case the awardee is a leader representing an organization or institution in the BARMM, the incentives shall be used only for the furtherance of the primary purpose of such organization or institution.

The incentives paid out of the SEAL Endowment Fund shall not be used for any of the following:

- a) Financing micro credits and loans;
- b) Travel expenses, whether domestic or foreign, except when the purpose is in advancement of the purposes of this Act;
- c) Administrative expenses of the LGU, organization, or institution, including, but not limited to, cash gifts, bonuses, food allowances, staff uniforms, communication bills, utilities, transportation costs, and the like;
- d) Purchase, maintenance, or repair of any motor vehicles or motorcycles not directly used for the SEAL undertaking;
- e) Salaries, wages, emoluments, per diems, or overtime pay of employees;
- f) Construction, repair, or refurnishing of administrative offices; and
- g) Loan guarantee.

SEC. 17. *Investment Strategy for the SEAL Endowment Fund.* – The BTO shall determine the investment strategy of the fund. *Provided*, That, as far as practicable, the BTO shall invest the endowment fund in *Shari'ah*-compliant, and/or pursuant to Islamic financing principles, investment products, whether foreign or local.

SEC. 18. *Schedule of Withdrawal.* – The BTO shall withdraw from the fund its profits corresponding only to the amount needed to pay the incentives of the SEAL awardee and the grant to the LGU, organization, or institution of the awardee. *Provided*, That no withdrawal shall be made by the BTO from the fund unless a certification is issued by the Selection Committee indicating the authority to withdraw, the name of the awardee and his/her LGU or organization or institution, and the date of issuance of such authorization.

SEC. 19. *Role of the Academe in Assessment.* – To ensure the integrity of the SEAL Program, the MILG shall engage accredited academic institutions within the BARMM to participate in the documentation, assessment, and validation of the leadership exemplars of SEAL Awardees. The

academe shall collaborate with the SEAL TWG for the following advancement and integrity-building of the Program:

- a) Develop evidence-based methodologies for evaluating the Awardee's performance in the three (3) leadership domains under Section 3 of this Act;
- b) Conduct independent reviews of documented achievements, community impact, and governance innovations; and
- c) Submit an annual analytical report to the MILG, Validation Team, and Selection Committee, highlighting best practices and lessons learned.

SEC. 20. Curriculum Integration. – Documented information, case studies, and leadership models derived from SEAL Awardees shall be institutionalized in the Public Administration courses of higher education institutions (HEIs) in BARMM, subject to the Commission on Higher Education guidelines. The SEAL TWG shall work with HEIs to:

- a) Adapt the Awardee's documented leadership practices into modules, syllabi, or training materials;
- b) Design capstone projects or research initiatives centered on the Awardee's contributions to the leadership domains; and
- c) Promote the SEAL legacy through lectures, workshops, or policy dialogues featuring the Awardee's exemplars.

The MILG, Validation Team, and Selection Committee, in coordination with the Office of the Higher Education in the BARMM, Mindanao State University Systems, Cotabato State University, and other state universities and private universities within the BARMM, shall ensure the effective implementation of this provision and review its impact on leadership education every three (3) years.

SEC. 21. Honorarium for Academic Participants. – Recognizing the expertise and contribution of academic partners, the SEAL Program shall provide reasonable honoraria to participating faculty, researchers, or institutions, subject to the following guidelines:

- a) Rates of Compensation – honoraria shall be determined by the MILG based on the complexity of tasks, duration of engagement, and prevailing BARMM government standards for technical services.
- b) Funding Source – the honoraria and related expenses shall be charged against the annual appropriation allocated for the SEAL Program.
- c) Disbursement – the SEAL TWG shall facilitate the processing and release of honoraria upon completion of deliverables, in accordance with auditing and accounting rules.

SEC. 22. Rules of Interpretation. – In order to ensure and preserve the prestige of the SEAL, in the interpretation of the provisions of this Act, all definitions of the criteria and all rules and regulations issued pursuant to this Act shall be strictly construed against the leader-nominee. It shall be the burden of the leader-nominee to show that it qualifies for the SEAL.

SEC. 23. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The MILG and the Ministry of Finance, and Budget and Management shall jointly formulate and promulgate the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within forty-five (45) days from the effectivity thereof.

SEC. 24. Transitory Provision. – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the existing SEAL Program of the MILG shall transition into SEAL Act of 2025.

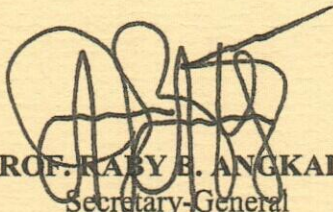
SEC. 25. Separability Clause. – Should any part or provision of this Act be held unconstitutional or invalid, all other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 26. Repealing Clause. – All regional laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 27. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Bangsamoro Gazette, or in one (1) newspaper of regional circulation, whichever is earlier.


ATTY. PANGALIAN M. BALISONG
Speaker

This Act was passed by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament on *Safar* 26, 1447/August 20, 2025.


PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL
Secretary-General

Approved:


ABDULRAOF A. MACACUA
Chief Minister
Date: SEP 24 2025

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