



**Rapid Field
Appraisal of
Decentralization**

Zamboanga Peninsula

Region 9

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Better Performance in Administration and Governance

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Decentralization in four aspects (administration and governance, health and service delivery, economic development, and environmental management) has provided opportunities for plurality of actors and increased accountability of local authorities. However, there is no systematic or comparative evidence on whether increased participation in decentralized local governance generates better outputs in terms of improvements in Region 9.

It is evident that because of the local government units' (LGUs) improved local taxation and revenue collection, including the operation of local enterprises, they are now addressing the actual needs of their constituents through the delivery of their mandated services. They have also allocated budgets on these and no longer only wait for national assistance to finance these projects.

Because of decentralization there is an increasing development of local capacity both in resources (manpower, machine, money, and methods) and management, which includes leadership, linkages, and networking systems and procedures. Evidently there is increased local autonomy and participation in localized decision-making, in turn accelerating development in most of the LGUs.

Increased public awareness and vigilance on all ongoing LGU projects made political personalities aware the importance of transparency, which could improve decentralization and reduce corruption.

All the LGUs agreed that there is a need to include the participation of different sectors in local governance and development with the active mobilization of all Local Development Councils (LDCs) and local special bodies, including various sectoral councils to improve LGUs performance.

Respondents in the Focused Group Discussions (FGD) agreed that decentralization resulted in improved basic-services delivery because of the participation of all the different sectors in the locality.

LGUs have also shown adequacy on governance-related issues such as transparency and meaningful stakeholders' participation and involvement in almost all of its programs and development plans.

Part 1 of the synthesis report provided a critical look on local governance and administration, and social and health services. The second part focused on economic governance and environmental management. It also examined the potential reinforcing factors as well as hindering factors on governance. Toward the conclusion, the section of the report cites best practices that need to be disseminated among LGUs.

Introduction

Western Mindanao Regional Profile

Located in the southwestern region of the Philippines, Region 9 covers the provinces of Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, and Zamboanga del Sur. Major cities include Zamboanga, Pagadian, Dipolog, and Dapitan. Due to its proximity to other nations, Western Mindanao is envisioned as the gateway and trading hub of the ASEAN communities, specifically the BIMP-EAGA (Brunei-Darussalam-Malaysia-Philippines East Asia Growth Area), and Australia and New Zealand.

The total population of the region based on the 2000 census is 3,045,000. Of this figure, 62 percent are in Zamboanga del Sur. Many of the inhabitants of Western Mindanao come from various tribal groups like the Yakan of Basilan, the Tau-Laut (commonly known as Badjaos), and the Subanon of the Zamboangas. The rest are migrants from Visayas and Luzon.

The region has a moderate climate, relatively dry from November to May, and rainy the rest of the year. It is located outside the typhoon belt area. Western Mindanao's land area is 15,997.3 sq. km., or 15.68 percent of the land in Mindanao, and five percent of the Philippines' total land area. Region 9 itself has a total land area of 1,599,734 hectares, of which 762,252 have been classified as alienable and disposable, and 837,482 as forestland.

The region has vast forest resources that produced export-quality logs, lumber, veneer, and plywood. Its mineral deposits include gold, chromite, coal, iron, and lead. Non-metallic reserves are coal, silica, salt, marble, sand, and gravel. It has the biggest deposits of lead in the country, making up 84 percent of the national total, while zinc has a 49 percent share, quartz has 52 percent, and silica sand has 34 percent.

The region's 1,330 kilometer coastline gives easy access to the Sulu Sea, Moro Gulf, Sindangan Bay, Pilas Channel, and Celebes Sea, which are some of the country's richest fishing grounds. Its fishing grounds are devoted to commercial and municipal fishing. It also has aqua farms for brackish water and freshwater fish.

Region 9 has the first export-processing zone in Mindanao, with farming and fishing as the main economic activities. It also has rice and corn mills, and has industries processing oil, coffee berry, and rubber latex. Its home industries include rattan and furniture crafts, basket making, weaving, and brass work.

The cities of Zamboanga, Dipolog, and Pagadian serve as the centers of trade, commerce, and education in the region. As of 1996, only approximately 45 percent of the potential irrigable area of 62,600 hectares is irrigated. Only 40 percent of the region's population has access to potable water while the remaining 60 percent get their drinking water from rivers, lakes, and open ponds.

Demographic Profile of Region 9 LGUs

The 11th Rapid Field Appraisal (RFA) covered the three provinces of Western Mindanao, the two capital cities Dipolog and Pagadian City, and seven municipalities, which were chosen based on income classification.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the LGUs

LGU	Basic Profile					
	LGU Type	Income Class	Population	Total Land Area (in has):	No. of Brgys.	No. of Households
Province						
Zamboanga del Norte	Province	1 st	924,924	730,101.00	691	189,456
Zamboanga Sibugay	Province	2 nd	561,154	360,725.00	389	117,250
Zamboanga del Sur	Province	1 st	925,981	473,471.00	687	188,394
Cities						
Pagadian	City	2 nd	175,839	37,880.00	54	34,698
Dipolog	City	3 rd	117,826	13,628.00	21	24,396
Municipalities						
Ipil	Municipality	1 st	61,345	36,690.00	28	12,037
Diplahan	Municipality	3 rd	28,918	25,551.00	22	5,786
Manuel Roxas	Municipality	3 rd	35,939	27,082.28	31	7,000
Mutia	Municipality	5 th	12,078	7,358.00	16	2,416
Guipos	Municipality	5 th	20,831	99,999.99	17	3,921
Talusan	Municipality	5 th	25,465	5,816.00	14	3,707
Labangan	Municipality	3 rd	39,301	16,790.00	25	6,771

The two cities, Pagadian and Dipolog, are thickly populated compared to other municipalities and provinces, but with less number of households. Pagadian has the highest number of population among the sample LGUs. However it has less number of households compared to the three provinces. Among the municipalities, only Ipil is classified as first class by income status.

RESULTS OF DECENTRALIZATION

I. Local Governance and Administration

Initially, results show a substantial evidence of the very satisfactory to slow performance ratings in all the five areas on administrative governance, specifically on local legislation, development planning, revenue collection, and human resource management and development. In local governance performance, six were performing very satisfactorily, two were average, and two were performing below satisfactory levels.

The overall measures revealed that 12 LGUs showed better performance in administration and governance. A very satisfactory performance was also displayed by the LGUs in customer service and human resource management and development. Seven of the LGUs also showed a relatively improved system regarding financial transactions with the use of various media, including in billboards, posters, bulletin boards, flyers, and online publications. The remaining five need to step up their performance through areas of revenue generation to local legislation and resource allocation and utilization.

Local Legislation

LGUs are now addressing the actual needs of their constituents through the delivery of their mandated services and allocating budgets for these, instead of waiting for national assistance to finance these projects. There is also improved local taxation and revenue collection, including the operation of local enterprises. Likewise, there is an increasing development of local capacity both in resources (manpower, machine, money, and methods) and management, which includes leadership, linkages, and networking systems and procedures. Evidently there is increased local autonomy and participation in localized decision making and the increasing momentum for accelerating development in most of the LGUs.

The elected officials and local executives are now also more accountable to their communities and people they serve. The LGUs also drew up a to-do list so that they can further improve local governance and administration:

1. Improve revenue generation through efficient collection of taxes and other fees, and develop the potential of the municipalities as part of economic growth;
2. Identify strategies, systems, programs and projects to improve delivery of services to constituents;

3. Improve planning and management processes;
4. Formulate agricultural plans and systems to address issues related to lack of extension workers and low agricultural production; and
5. Increase the participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Private Sector Organizations (PSO) in local governance.

Legal and Regulatory Framework from Local Ordinances

The cities of Pagadian and Dipolog, the two provinces of Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga Sibugay, and the municipalities of Guipos and Roxas have a significant number of ordinances and resolutions that have shown positive outcomes in terms of democratization and participation, program development, public service performance, and poverty alleviation. Most of the benefits from the localized ordinances came from increased participation of sectors concerned.

Examples of these ordinances in the municipality of Mutia include budgetary support for the procurement of planting materials for rubber and abaca production, providing guidelines for the dispersal of poultry and livestock, and providing additional fringe benefits and better working conditions for LGU employees.

Imperatives of Quality Legislation

Almost all the LGUs agreed on the need for a legislative staff with greater competence and knowledge on legislative tools such as agenda development, legislative tracking, backstopping committee, and legislative performance. At present, the LGUs do not have Sanggunian personnel with the knowledge and competency in legislative tracking system.

Transparency

According to the respondents, increased public awareness and vigilance on all ongoing projects of the LGUs made political personalities realize that transparency could also increase their popularity and trust among their constituents, and could give them more opportunities to gain power over their rivals, and thus improve decentralization. This in turn provides the public greater opportunity to monitor local officials' performance and lessen corruption.

LGUs used various ways to inform people about projects, such as radio programs, websites, community assemblies, and performance reports. They also shared information through bulletin boards, newsletters, photo galleries, and accomplishment reports, which are usually being displayed in conspicuous places. Events like anniversaries and festivities of the provinces as in the province of Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur, including Sibugay, usually had displays of project profiles. Some LGUs also employ public information desks, along with systems of grievances and complaints,

including referral systems. Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur have been very active in displaying information about projects being undertaken.

Participation-Participatory Development Index

All the LGUs agreed that there is a need to include the participation of different sectors in local governance and development with the active mobilization of all LDCs and local special bodies, including various sectoral councils. The LDC is the mechanism used for coordinating the efforts of the national and local government offices, as well as NGOs, to accelerate economic and social development at the local level. Other functional participating councils in the LGUs studied are the Municipal Development Council (MDC), Municipal health Board (MHB), Municipal School Board (MSB), Municipal Peace and Order Council (MPOC), and sectoral councils representing children, women, senior citizens, among others.

Respondents agreed that decentralization resulted in successful experiences in improving the delivery of basic services because of the participation of all the different sectors. Two mayors experiencing patronage politics, however, said that it could be a risk to encourage stakeholders to participate. This practice, they said, is usually monopolized by those loyal to incumbent officials come election time.

Development Planning

As for development planning, eight LGUs were performing very satisfactorily, while two were performing satisfactorily. In the past, there were many tools provided to enhance planning and development. Yet while projects and programs are strategy-driven, performance depends on the capacity of the planning officer to adopt these processes and to link different planning initiatives to make these useful for the LGUs. Still, it is evident that multi-sectoral representation is now observed. LGUs now have a higher capacity for making of development plans, executive-legislative agenda (ELAs), and strategic planning exercises.

The Panguil Bay Development Council (PBDC) is one example that shows the commitment of political and civil society leaders of Zamboanga del Sur. PBDC is an administrative mechanism created to ensure systematic planning and coordination of development policies and programs in the coastal areas of Zamboanga Sur.

Resource Generation

Tables 2A and 2B show the divergent nature of the region's income classes from (high, medium and low), and reflect the wide disparity in their ability to raise income within five years from their ability to levy taxes. The average revenue collected as income varies significantly between LGUs, ranging from between 1.36 to 3.02 percent for the

provinces, to between 10 and 11 percent among cities, and between 1.19 to 11.84 percent for municipalities. There is a large difference in income generation from high to low and the differences in their revenue by sources. It can be seen that the LGUs have less than 12 percent collection from tax revenues and less than 20 percent from non-tax revenues. Generally the LGUs showed a total of 92 to 63 percent share from national tax, with most having less than 10 percent income generated from other sources. In an average of five years, the total shares from national taxes ranged from 94 to 63 percent.

The LGUs' Financial Status

Table 2A: Average Income Generation in 3 Provinces and 2 Cities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Zamboanga del Norte	Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga Sibugay	Dipolog City	Pagadian City
TOTAL INCOME (Php million)	940.18	591.86	435.89	314.94	397.68
Percent of Total					
Total Tax Revenue	1.36	3.02	2.02	11.84	10.33
Total Non-Tax Revenue	18.02	2.68	2.49	12.36	14.72
Total Local Source	19.38	5.69	4.50	24.20	25.05
Total Shares from National Tax Collections	70.87	91.96	92.64	71.82	74.95
Other Income	9.74	2.35	2.85	3.99	0.00

Source: BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008

Table 2B: Average Income Generation in 7 Municipalities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Mutia	Roxas	Diplahan	Ipil	Talusan	Guipos	Labangan
TOTAL INCOME (Php million)	22.10	55.87	40.29	85.14	26.85	28.11	44.07
Percent of Total							
Total Tax Revenue	2.17	9.38	3.11	9.49	1.19	2.35	2.43
Total Non-Tax Revenue	2.83	17.28	4.29	22.18	2.82	8.17	2.03
Total Local Source	5.00	26.66	7.40	31.68	4.01	10.52	4.46
Total Shares from National Tax Collections	94.97	71.08	92.61	63.50	90.40	88.62	87.92
Other Income	0.01	2.26	0.00	4.82	5.58	0.85	7.62

Source: BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008

The experiences of the municipality of Roxas and the city of Dipolog are proof that LGUs have increased their capacity in resource generation and efficient management of funds. Ordinances creating additional revenues and increasing the existing tariffs for LGU facilities resulted in high revenue collection for the LGUs. Zamboanga del Norte had the highest generated income from local and external sources, including borrowings. Revenues generated from local sources came from real property taxes, business tax/local income, and non-tax/operating and miscellaneous revenues. The external sources came from local government share on Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA), grants and aid, and borrowings.

The LGUs' various fund sources include the IRA, locally generated revenue from taxes, business rates on fees, and charges for certain services. In general, the LGUs were able to generate revenue through their own sources of tax and user charges to provide services to the community, but they also relied heavily on the IRA – from 63 to 93 percent. The average proportion of locally generated revenues is actually low: between 4.57 and 37 percent for the last five years. The sole exception is the municipality of Ipil, with almost 50 percent.

Real Property Tax

There are variations in the Real Tax Accomplishment (RTA) rates of LGUs within the region. The real property tax (RPT) is the biggest single source of locally generated LGU revenue. Yet the LGUs' LRPT collection rates were lower compared to the national average, as well as those in other regions. This was attributed to political constraints in the passing of ordinances and other policies that might help in RPT collection.

Internal Revenue Allotment

Aside from the IRA, the LGUs' income is augmented by Own-Source Revenues (OSR) from operating and miscellaneous revenues, capital revenues, grants, extraordinary receipts, and borrowings. On the average, the two first-class provinces receive an IRA share not lower than P750 million while Zamboanga Sibugay comparably receives only about 60 percent of that. The two cities receive only about 20 to 23 percent of what the provinces receive as IRA.

Table 3A: Locally-Sourced Revenues to Total Income

		Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga del Norte	Zamboanga Sibugay	Talusan	Mutia	Labangan
Municipality/ City	DR	90.28	96.00	96.62	98.46	38.00	97.31
	LS	9.72	4.00	3.38	1.54	62.00	2.89
Ave. Class	DR	84.28	84.28	89.63	86.27	86.22	82.67
	LS	15.72	15.72	10.37	13.73	13.70	17.33
National Average	DR	87.80	87.80	87.80	81.31	81.30	81.31
	LS	12.20	12.20	12.20	18.69	18.70	18.69

Table 3B: Locally-Sourced Revenues to Total Income

		Guipos	Diplahan	Ipil	Roxas	Dipolog	Pagadian
Municipality/ City	DR	27.00	90.00	60.00	62.80	72.73	76.80
	LS	73.00	10.00	40.00	38.00	22.27	23.20
Ave. Class	DR	86.27	82.67	73.62	82.67	68.24	67.58
	LS	13.73	17.33	26.38	17.33	31.76	32.42
National Average	DR	81.31	81.31	81.31	81.33	66.69	66.40
	LS	18.69	18.69	18.69	18.70	33.31	33.60

Legend: DR = Dependency Rate from External Revenue Sources; LS = Locally-Sourced Revenues to Local Incomes.

Source: DILG LGPMS PY2009

Limited Resource Generation Capacity

The national government has encouraged LGUs to increase OSR, but this has apparently been difficult to do for many LGUs. Tables 3A and 3B, shows that the LGUs are highly IRA-dependent, with IRA making up between 90 and 95 percent of their total income. The reasons for LGUs inability to increase their own source revenues include the limited power of taxation with low tax rates, and lack of political will among local officials to implement alternative methods or revenues. The small percentage of OSR to the municipal income and its IRA ranges from zero to 7.62 percent as shown in Table 2B.

Table 4A: Selected Fiscal Indicators of 3 Provinces and 2 Cities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Five Years Average, 2004-2008				
	Zamboanga del Norte	Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga Sibugay	Dipolog City	Pagadian City
Percent IRA to Total Revenue	70.69%	91.95%	90.46%	71.82%	74.95%
Percent Locally Generated Revenue to IRA	27.42%	6.19%	4.98%	33.69%	33.42%
Percent Tax Revenue to Local Generated Revenue	7.01%	52.97%	44.78%	48.94%	41.23%
Percent Locally Generated Revenue to Total Expenditure	22.49%	6.56%	4.61%	27.67%	38.83%
Percent IRA to Total Expenditure	82.01%	105.97%	92.67%	82.14%	116.17%
Percent Total Revenue to Total Expenditure	116.03%	115.25%	102.44%	114.37%	154.99%

Source: BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008

Table 4B: Selected Fiscal Indicators of 7 Municipalities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Five Years Average, 2004-2008						
	Mutia	Roxas	Diplahan	Ipil	Talusan	Guipos	Labangan
Percent IRA to Total Revenue	93.75%	71.02%	91.60%	63.46%	87.82%	86.74%	87.91%
Percent Locally Generated Revenue to IRA	5.34%	37.54%	8.08%	49.92%	4.57%	12.13%	5.07%
Percent Tax Revenue to Local Generated Revenue	43.40%	35.19%	42.08%	29.97%	29.63%	22.33%	54.47%
Percent Locally Generated Revenue to Total Expenditure	5.24%	30.23%	8.18%	36.24%	4.28%	10.91%	4.55%
Percent IRA to Total Expenditure	98.15%	80.54%	101.33%	72.60%	93.76%	89.98%	89.59%
Percent Total Revenue to Total Expenditure	104.70%	113.40%	110.62%	114.41%	106.76%	103.73%	101.90%

Source: *BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008*

Resource Allocation and Utilization

The region's expenditure reflected varied trends for general public services, health and nutrition, and economic services. Almost all its LGUs have no expenditure for labor and employment, housing and community development, as well as debt servicing. Salaries and recurrent expenditures tend to account for a large share of local government outlays for general public services, specifically for the health and economic sectors. There were more limited expenditures on education and none for housing, and employment. Resource allocation and utilization improvements in organizational performance, consultation process, and management of planning database are needed.

Table 5A: Percent Average Expenditures of 3 Provinces and 2 Cities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Zamboanga del Norte	Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga Sibugay	Dipolog City	Pagadian City
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (Php million)	810.32	513.56	425.50	275.37	256.58
Percent of Total					
General Public Services	23.44	51.08	42.25	23.80	38.32
Education, Culture & Sports/Manpower Development	1.13	1.33	1.02	1.54	1.35
Health, Nutrition & Population Control	17.80	2.23	3.05	5.23	7.03
Labor & Employment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00
Housing & Community Development	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.91	0.65
Social Security /Social Services & Welfare	0.76	1.05	2.09	3.11	1.81
Economic Services	38.99	22.17	23.29	21.86	15.11
Debt Service	1.22	0.00	0.67	4.39	0.00
Other Purposes	16.66	22.14	27.64	38.07	35.74

Source: BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008

Table 5B: Percent Average Expenditures of 7 Municipalities in Zamboanga Region (2004-2008)

	Mutia	Roxas	Diplahan	Ipil	Talusan	Guipos	Labangan
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (Php million)	21.10	49.27	36.42	74.41	25.15	27.10	43.25
Percent of Total							
General Public Services	56.45	52.00	56.40	35.24	92.73	45.64	56.13
Education, Culture & Sports/ Manpower Development	0.72	1.25	0.82	1.22	0.11	0.83	0.75
Health, Nutrition & Population Control	12.23	6.13	7.55	8.48	0.42	4.69	6.93
Labor & Employment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00
Housing & Community Development	0.79	0.00	0.00	2.24	0.36	0.00	0.00

	Mutia	Roxas	Diplahan	Ipil	Talusan	Guipos	Labangan
Social Security/Social Services & Welfare	3.45	1.82	3.66	3.51	0.00	1.31	1.40
Economic Services	7.81	25.48	11.53	30.99	5.23	10.72	13.01
Debt Service	2.59	0.56	0.00	7.04	1.02	0.00	7.66
Other purposes	15.96	12.76	20.04	11.19	0.12	36.82	14.11

Source: BLGF Financial Data 2001-2008

Debt Service Ratio

Debt servicing is the minimum key to sustain other development programs. The debt service ratio of all the LGUs is far below the required average of 20 percent. Zamboanga del Norte and Sibugay's debt service ratios are below five percent. At an average, most of the LGUs are within or below 15 percent, characterized as a conservative debt service ratio.

Financial Accountability

Most LGUs provided effective financial management procedures in financial transactions. The management and coordination processes for budgeting and accounting were observed to be in place in almost all LGUs. However, these processes need to be revisited and improved to be able to guarantee an effective allocation and optimum utilization of financial resources. Reviewing the data capture form, for instance, revealed that the accounting records were not supported by source documentation such as cancelled checks, paid bills, payrolls, contracts, sub-contracts, and other financial documents. The responsibility of the accountable financial officers were also not made clear, disbursements were not made only for approved purposes, erring local government personnel regarding financial transactions are not properly sanctioned, and procedures in the financial transactions with the LGUs are not made available by any means.

Customer Service

In terms of customer service, the LGUs have provided the necessary training on the value of courtesy and prompt servicing. Most of the LGUs have created Provincial and Municipal Information Desks. Flowcharts and organizational charts are also placed in conspicuous areas for information on transactions being done at either the provincial or municipal level. There are units of LGUs that conduct meetings or orientations for programs being undertaken by the LGUs. Other tools and equipment are in place to better respond to clientele and other customer needs.

Human Resources Management

Nine of the LGUs covered were rated very high in human resource development. Only one had a poor rating. There were enacted measures that helped improve salaries and wages, along with honoraria for services in concurrent capacity, including fringe benefits and better working conditions. In Dipolog City, a human resources development and investment program reform is ongoing. Still, Human Resources Management (HRM) Department practices have to be improved in the region, specifically practicing transparency in recruitment and selection, valuing stability in employment, recognition of good performance, and promotion of professional growth. The opportunity to be heard through a personnel grievance system is also essential.

Networking and Linkaging

The presence of LGU partners in various key areas has improved. The LGUs' increased tax collections were evidence of better development and management of alliances with the business sector. LGUs also showed an increased capacity to negotiate with private companies. Examples of this are production agreements with industry like contract growing and negotiations with local and foreign agencies to acquire heavy equipment. Under the Kennedy Round 2 Project of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the municipality of Ipil is also implementing a rehabilitation project worth P1.10 million. The project's main objective is to increase Ipil's forest cover by planting 20,000 forest and commercial tree species in the denuded areas of the Dona Josefa watershed.

II. Health and Social Services

The LGUs' income per capita is extremely low, with high poverty incidence; many families live below the poverty threshold. Household access to piped-in water supply (level III) is also very low. There is difficulty in accessing water, as well as electricity. The crude death rate among infants is abnormally high because of common illnesses prevalent among children.

Health Services

Table 6: Population and Health Indicators

Province/City/ Municipality	Population		No. of Gov't Hospitals		No. of Health Centers/ RHU*		No. of Barangay Health Stations*		No. of Gov't Physicians		Ratio of Gov't Physicians to population	
	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008
Zamboanga del Sur	556,744	736,135	13	13	26	26	163	163	21	23	1:26,511	1:32,005
Pagadian City	163,157**	170,681	2	2	4	4	27	26	6	2	1:27,193	1:85,340
Labangan	37,598**				ND	ND	ND	ND		1	1:37,598	
Guipos	19,616**				1	1	ND	ND		-		
Zamboanga del Norte	725,250	752,608	8	8	25	26	196	247	22	27	1:32,925	1:27,874
Dipolog City	111,735	115,999	5	5	1	1	26	26	3	3	1:37,245	1:38,666
Mutia	10,976	11,404			1	1	5	5	-	1		1:11,404
Roxas	35,939**	39,996			1	1	ND	ND	1	1	1:35,939	
Sibugay Province	556,744	579,443	4	4	16	16	110	110	16	16	1:34,796	1:36,215
Ipil	60,686**	61,345			1	1	ND	ND	2	2	1:30,343	1:30,672
Diplahan	23,909	27,154			1	1	ND	ND		1	1:23,909	1:27,154
Talusan	22,875**				3	3	ND	ND		1	1:22,875	

Sources: 2009 RSET Zamboanga Peninsula

* DOH Facility

Socio-Economic Profile of Municipalities

** Year 2007 Data

Annual Reports and Legislative Agenda

ND = no data

The ratio of government health workers to the population is almost similar throughout all LGUs in the region, with one doctor per population of over 20,000. The Department of Health (DOH) recommends a health worker population ratio of one doctor and one nurse per 20,000 population, and one midwife per 5,000 population (Magna Carte for Health Workers). The limited number of personnel services and health facilities are due to the restrictions of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Not all health facilities have a complete line up of health professionals while health centers lack medical equipment and resources. Patients with major illness and surgical needs are usually referred to provincial hospitals.

As noted in the above table, the local health facilities have not increased in number over the years. Only the barangay facilities have marked differences in terms of barangay health stations established, except in Zamboanga del Norte.

Table 7: Number of Health Professionals by Province/City (2008)

Health Personnel	Norte	Sur	Sibugay	Dipolog	Pagadian
Physician	27	23	16	3	6
Nurse	47	50	32	7	5
Midwife	239	159	118	24	30
Dentist	13	8	12	2	2
Nutritionist	0	1	0	0	0
Med Tech	20	22	13	1	30
Sanitary Inspector	35	30	20	5	7
Sanitary Engineer	0	0	0	0	0
Active BHWs	2141	2870	1290	87	280
Dental Aide	10	5	5	2	2
Trained Birth Attendants	644	694	526	48	67
Non Technical	22	28	17	0	6
Casual/Contractual	46	0	0	0	0

Source DOH, Region 9 NSCB 2009

All the three provinces are served by very few physicians and need specialists in the various fields of medicine. The data do not include the private hospitals operating within the region. Still, the demand-gap analysis made by DOH in 2008 revealed that the total number of physicians, nurses, dentists, and midwives are the only positions considered adequate based on standards.

Procurement of Important Drugs and Supplies

Most Rural Health and Municipal Health Units have essential medicines and supplies on hand. Commonly used drugs for common ailments, among them paracetamol, amoxicillin, oral anti-malarial medicine, zinc supplements, and oral hydration tablets are normally available but limited; they are not sufficient in volume to be called a

buffer stock in case of disease outbreaks and emergencies. Bulk procurement of drugs through pharmaceutical representatives is quite expensive compared to generic drugs. This includes supplies in LGU-implementation of DOH programs like the Expanded Program on Immunization and Micronutrient Supplementation. When LGUs are not able to provide the drugs needed, the patients are left with the option of purchasing the needed supplies for their own use.

Community Health

A number of successful public-private collaboration in providing health care services were also noted among the 12 LGUs where decentralization played an instrumental role to improve the basic health-service delivery. These included health services extended by foreign medical outreach programs and other socio-civic organizations being coordinated by the LGUs. The outstanding support services mentioned by LGUs in terms of health and nutrition were:

Collaborative support of institutions. Humanitarian Emergency Logistics Preparedness (HELP), a non-profit organization, is focused on meeting the needs of many victims of natural and man-made disasters on a global crisis. Randy Robertson, HELP president and founder, donated US\$300,000 to the Ateneo de Zamboanga School of Medicine (ADZU-SOM) after he read an article by an ADZU-SOM MHU doctor in Mutia, Zamboanga del Norte. The article entitled A Cry for Help, described how a 14-month boy who looked like a 75-year-old had died after suffering from malnutrition. It showed how poverty could also be considered a severe and depressing illness. The Municipal Health Office of Mutia assisted the boy, but could not go beyond giving him oral antipyretics and antibiotics and then sending him to a hospital. The municipal doctor's article prompted action from many individuals aside from Robertson and organizations like HELP.

Implementation of the 4Ps. The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a poverty reduction and social development strategy of the national government, with the local health unit assisting in its implementation. It has resulted in a marked increase in the utilization of health and nutrition services, in particular maternal-child care service. But the increased utilization of these services has also created supply-related problems, the rise in pre-natal needs, for example, led to a shortage of pills and revealed a need for more accredited birthing centers.

Paagadian City, meanwhile, also has a fund raising program called the *Piso-Piso Para sa Malnutrisyon* campaign. Initiated and run by the City Nutrition Committee (CNC), it supports the feeding of malnourished children in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the City Social Welfare and Development Office. The LGU's contributes health personnel in the field.

Maternal and Infant Mortality Rate

The City Nutrition Committee of Pagadian City, DOH, and NGOs conduct seminars and training for Barangay Health Nutritionists, Barangay Health Workers, mother volunteers, caregivers, and parents on proper feeding in support to the different health programs in barangays.

Table 8: LGU Infant and Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births, by Province (2005)

Infant Mortality Rate	2000	2002	2004	2005
Zambo Pen	12.0	12.2	10.4	11.5
Zambo Norte	11.3	12.8	11.2	10.8
Zambo Sur	12.3	13.7	11.2	13.1
Zambo Subugay	-	7.4	6.0	7.2
Maternal Mortality Rate				
Zambo Pen	126.5	124.6	148.3	146.4
Zambo Norte	149.9	95.3	123.3	124.9
Zambo Sur	117.1	138.6	173.4	150.9

Sources: DOH and as reported by NSCB (2009).

The five-year average among the LGUs live births for IMR is lower than the regional figure. The leading causes of infant deaths in the region are: pneumonia, acute gastroenteritis, prematurity, fetal distress, septicemia, sudden death infant syndrome, malnutrition, asphyxia, severe anemia and sepsis neonatorum as shown in the table. The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) of the provincial LGUs significantly increased from 2000 to 2005, although there was a significant decrease of mortality in 2002 in Zamboanga del Norte. Among the most common causes of maternal deaths in the region are post-partum hemorrhage, uterine atony, and placental retention.

Areas of Interventions for the Supply- Side on Health and Nutrition Programs

With the increased demand for health and nutrition brought about by the implementation of the 4Ps, the supply side interventions were not given due attention. Data gathered show that two provinces and two cities are within the average in terms of health and nutrition expenditures, which ranged from two to seven percent only of their respective budgets. Zamboanga del Norte has the highest with 17.8 percent of its budget going to health programs.

Support to Education

Zamboanga del Sur has the highest number of elementary enrolment supported by the national government with the assistance of the LGUs. There is now a greater number of school children enrolled in government schools for elementary and secondary

levels compared to other years. The three provinces in the region have comparable population except for the two cities, Dipolog and Pagadian. It will require a total of 3,204 classrooms to provide a standard classroom ratio of 1:45 for elementary grade following the increasing trend of enrolment until 2020. There are still primary and elementary school with no functional classrooms. Additional teachers are also needed to accommodate the first graders and increased enrollment especially in far-flung barangays. (*LGU, Compiled Reports, 2006-2009*)

Table 9: Enrollment in Govt. & Private Schools by Elementary & Secondary Levels (SY 2008-2009)

Elementary	Government	Private	Total
Zambo Norte	114,211	440	144,651
Zambo Sur	122,724	808	123,532
Zambo Sibugay	90,928	892	91,820
Dipolog City	17,093	985	18,078
Pagadian	24,285	1,035	25,320
Secondary			
Zambo Norte	42,693	3,537	46,230
Zambo Sur	45,605	6,678	52,283
Zambo Sibugay	34,502	4,323	38,825
Dipolog City	9,813	1,826	11,639
Pagadian	14,251	2,751	2,751
Region 9			
Elementary	542,527	12,175	554,702
Secondary	203,928	28,207	232,135

Source: 2009 RSET IX (DepEd Report 2009, Region 9)

Other local resources for education like the Special Education Fund (SEF) of the Provincial government and municipalities support programs like Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQUALLS), Assistance for the Comprehensive Educational Development of Mindanao (ASCEND), Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE), Project Team Mindanao (Knowledge Channel), National Proficiency Program (NEPP), and the Child-Friendly School System (CFSS).

Table 10: Performance Indicators in Gov't Elementary & Secondary Schools by Province/City (SY 2008-2009)

Elementary	Region 9	Zambo Norte	Zambo Sur	Zambo Sibugay	Dipolog	Pagadian
Enrollment Rate	95.78	111.21	84.60	87.42	87.17	81.83
Retention Rate	90.88	92.42	88.29	92.30	94.62	92.81
Survival Rate	60.88	68.73	54.06	66.02	67.87	66.35
Completion Rate	59.84	66.99	53.83	64.82	67.98	66.35
Drop-Out Rate	0.40	0.27	0.83	0.36	0.07	0.18
Transition Rate	97.16	99.94	94.93	97.44	98.12	96.96
Graduation Rate	98.18	97.16	99.20	97.70	99.56	99.83
Secondary						
Enrollment Rate	61.37	56.32	54.17	57.16	85.62	82.75
Retention Rate	87.32	85.81	88.13	87.80	88.58	92.71
Survival Rate	59.83	57.95	62.67	57.43	62.15	76.13
Completion Rate	53.66	55.40	60.61	55.53	54.75	72.92
Drop-Out Rate	4.12	4.52	2.99	2.92	7.16	3.25
Transition Rate	91.67	85.24	81.45	89.42	113.76	114.85
Graduation Rate	88.67	94.36	96.09	94.90	86.30	95.41

Source: 2009 RSET IX (DepEd Report 2009, Region 9)

More than 30 percent of the elementary pupils drop out from school because of poverty. Parents either make schooling for their children less of a priority or make the children help in earning a living to augment the family's income. The LGUs need to increase their education budget to improve the quality of education. Currently LGUs' support for education ranges from one percent to two percent of their total budget.

Pre-school education in most LGUs is now more widespread, with private and government day care centers spread even in remote barangays. Municipal Social Welfare and Development Offices (MSWDOs) are also operating and supporting day care programs, adopting Early Child Care and Development (ECCD). Other LGU initiatives include providing supplies and materials, supplemental feeding of malnourished children, and other support programs. The Provincial Council for the Welfare of the Children also established a KAABAG Center for Women and Home for the Children. In addition, it created the committee to address cases among women and children in need of protection and rehabilitation.

Gender and Women Programs

Pro-Poor and Women Representation in Local Councils. Livelihood and skills training were cited by six LGUs as assistance to fishermen, youth, women, and the elderly. LGUs put up local improvement clubs for housewives engaged in livelihood projects to augment family income. This is where most of the five percent Gender and Development (GAD) budget is being used. Dipolog City was cited by the International Alliance for Women – World of Difference as one of the cities worldwide where women can get ahead in a highly competitive and macho economy. In Dipolog City, 13 departments in the city government are headed by women, including the Office of the City Engineer, which is traditionally occupied by men. Its mayor is a woman and there are four female barangay captains. 23 women in all were elected into the 21 barangay councils.

Housing and Basic Utilities

Majority of the people among the provincial and municipal LGUs reside in the poblacion and urban areas. There are huge areas, mainly the urban sites and growth centers, which suffer congestion problems. The three provinces and two cities in particular are also confronted with public land squatting as a result of higher population growth. The cities and municipalities are simply unable to absorb the increased number of local in-migrants. RA 7279 otherwise known as Urban Development and Housing Act is implemented by private developers as requirement for the development of housing projects that could help not only in-migrants, but also those who cannot afford to build houses at a lower cost.

In low-income LGUs, the types of existing houses are mostly a mixture of temporary structures made up of bamboo, sawali, cogon, nipa, and wood. Data gathered during the FGD showed that the share of expenditures in housing and community development to total budget does not even reach one percent. In two provinces, it is even zero. LGUs need to prioritize local resources to address this situation and identify sufficient land for housing purposes for all income groups. They should also consider socialized housing and resettlement areas based on the affordability level of target beneficiaries.

Peace and Security

LGUs coordinate with the police to improve the peace and order conditions of the region by ensuring security measures like police visibility in busy areas to ward off lawless elements. Ipil put up a CCTV system to monitor peace and safety in its business district. LGUs have also intensified campaigns against drugs, prosecuting drug lords while rehabilitating users. Counter insurgency measures were also conducted by the Philippine Army, which established several stations of infantry divisions.

Disaster Preparedness

The Disaster Coordinating Councils of LGUs are organized. A few are functional and are working to ensure security in their respective areas of jurisdiction, but some are not functional. Problems on disaster in the three provinces are in lowland areas, which still lack comprehensive flood control and drainage systems. Even with short durations of rainfall, Dipolog City and other municipalities of Zamboanga del Norte experience flashfloods, disrupting the movement of people and economic activities in the area.

III. Economic Development

Most LGUs in the region are engaged in agriculture, farming, and fishing. One example of LGU initiative on local economic development is the Zamboanga del Norte's GAWAD SAKA winners, including outstanding farmers in the rice, corn, fish culture, and young farmers categories. The Integrated Crops Development Assistance program has also supported the establishment of quality agricultural extension and on-site research services and facilities. Other LGU initiatives being sustained are the establishment of demonstration farms planted to high-value commercial crops, as well as of nurseries for seedling production of fruits, forest, and rubber trees for distribution to farmers and other institutions, among them Gulayan sa Paaralan. Overall, vegetable and fruit farming and backyard livestock production are the most pronounced engagements of the farmers, resulting in an abundance of palay, corn, and coconut production.

However, problems remain in entrepreneurship, business, and industry promotion. The absence of Enterprise, Business and Promotion Councils (EBPC) and a Local Investment and Incentive Code has hampered economic development in their areas.

LGUs said that much more income can be generated by agriculture, fishing, mining, industrial, and commercial services, even as these continued to be the major sources of economic activity and livelihood in the region. Tourism also has a high potential for generating more revenues for the region, with attractions ranging from spectacular beaches to historical sites and museums.

Overall, the quality of performance in terms of economic development was relevant but not excellent among the LGUs in Region 9. Among areas for improvement are:

- *Infrastructure support, e.g. communal irrigation system, farm-to market roads, post-harvest facilities, credit facilitation services to farmers.* The LGUs have to extend adequate production support such as planting materials, fertilizers, and laboratory services, and to more farming household-beneficiaries.

- Advocacy for Enabling Economic Enhancing Environment. There is a need to improve the quality of permitting or licensing to ensure the ease of doing business. The LGUs have to speed up the process of issuing building, occupancy, and business permits and establish an administrative support body to take the lead in marketing the LGUs' investment potentials. Provision of support services in the form of tax incentives, product labeling, product packaging, training, job fairs, and trade fairs is also needed. It is high time that civil society organizations link with government and NGOs in creating economic opportunity.
- Support to agricultural sectors and fishery services. The wish list includes infrastructure support (e.g. communal irrigation system, farm-to-market roads, post-harvest facilities), improved credit facilitation services to farmers, production support (e.g. planting materials, fertilizers), laboratory services such as soil testing, assistance to research and development (e.g. techno-demo cooperators and research institutes), and improved market development services (e.g. trade fairs, exhibits, missions and congresses). For fishery services there is a need to mobilize the Fisheries and Resource Aquatic Council to help protect and manage municipal waters and perform its mandated tasks, among them the improvement of infrastructure support for the fishery sector like mariculture parks, fish ports, seaweeds village ecozones, and sea cages, as well as the extension of credit facilitation services to fisherfolk.

Major Agriculture Economic Activities

The LGUs' desire to increase agricultural production has intensified the production of livestock, poultry, and swine. Other programs included expansion of beneficiaries for crop production, especially for coconut and banana. In line with the nationwide implementation of the Participatory Coconut Planting Project (PCPP) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Philippine Coconut Authority, LGUs have also played a role in encouraging farmers to improve the planting of coconuts. The Integrated Farming Systems that integrated coconut with lanzones, durian, rambutan, ginger, flowers, coffee and *kangkong* has also been introduced. In Zamboanga Sibugay and Zamboanga del Norte local entrepreneurs are improving and promoting coco-based products. A most promising income-earner among high-value crops is rubber, which is the focus of many activities in Zamboanga del Norte and Sibugay.

Fishery and Aquatic Resources. Fishponds, agar-agar production, and contract poultry-growing projects are prevalent economic activities. The major fishing grounds are in Illana, Dumaguilas, and Panguil Bays. In order to curb the gradual destruction experienced in most areas, effective resource management strategies and measures, along with plans and coordination mechanisms, have been initiated and established by LGUs. There has been a successful implementation of Coastal Resource Management

(CRM) programs that incorporate proper CRM management practices with good environmental governance principles. A planned and established marine sanctuary emphasizing local leaders' strong political will contributed to the success of the CRM in Labangan, a Muslim-dominated community. Other programs include a CRM program that aims to establish fish sanctuaries in five coastal municipalities to prevent depletion of marine resources and total extinction of rare species

Offshore Fishing. The commercial fishers in the provinces of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte are operating in neighboring coastal waters due to decreasing marine resources of both provinces. LGU efforts and initiatives like the creation of structures and sub structures like the Fishery Law Enforcement Team (FLET) and Ilana Bay Regional Alliance (BRA IX), along with collaboration with multi-sectoral groups in the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and management of the coastal resources resulted in the gradual increase in municipal and commercial fishing production.

Mining. Based on the CY 2007 to 2009 report by Zamboanga Sibugay, there are still small-scale mining operations found in Diplahan, Zamboanga Sibugay. The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) reported several tenement holders in Zamboanga Sibugay and Zamboanga del Sur with Area Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (AMPSA) beyond 2007 that have already suspended operations. From 2007 to 2008, in fact, only nine were left. Mining activities had increased tax and fee revenues. But if small-scale mining operations continue to be suspended, there would obviously be less revenues for the LGUs.

The Tourism Potential. The three provinces are endowed with vast natural attractions such as beaches, caves, waterfalls, and springs. Some of these attractions are developed as economic enterprises by the LGUs or some private entities. Many of these remain untapped due to inaccessibility and funding constraints. In fact, only five of the 12 LGUs have well developed natural attractions and rich historical sites.

The provinces also have festivals like the Kasadya and Hudyaka that can attract tourists. Provincial governments have assisted other municipalities in the development of tourism sites like the construction of municipal rotundas, installation of millennium lights, development of the Pinahon Island, the Gloria de Dapitan, and others. Ecotourism, however, ranks least among the LGUs' economic enterprise priorities.

Employment and Services. Job fora were organized by the LGUs in partnership with other institutions such as Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), NGOs, and private sector. They also held livelihood seminars for the unemployed. The most prominent investors in the 12 LGUs are in the technology communication systems like Internet providers.

Presence of Local Public Enterprises with NGOs and Private Sector. To some degree, only the provinces and cities that have higher and improved financial status and operations are able to source external funds from local public enterprises in collaboration with NGOs, private investors, and other groups. The private sector has been an effective partner of LGUs in their community development, and has demonstrated good management of income-generating projects especially in Pagadian, Dipolog, Ipil, and Roxas.

Presence of Banks, Basic Infrastructure and Facilities in Business and Industry Zones. The presence of banks within the LGUs has contributed a lot in terms of economic improvement. Most of the local banks situated in the LGUs offer relevant financial services to the local population such as agricultural grants and commercial and micro finance loans. The LGUs' role is to facilitate the implementation of the different plans envisioned to help the economic development of the provinces, municipalities, and cities, with the bank supporting these in terms of loans. But the very low borrowings of all the LGUs except for Mutia attest to the fact that LGUs still have a conservative financial behavior.

IV. Environmental Management

Solid Waste Management (SWM)

LGUs have agreed on the need to strengthen and improve the quality of the SWM Board, ensuring that every barangay has a material recovery facility that would also entail the use of an Open Dumpsite Facility and then a Sanitary Landfill as the final disposal facility. A classic example of such an endeavor is the Zamboanga del Sur Women Zero Waste Recycling Movement Multi-Purpose Cooperative, which has created widespread awareness on recycling practices and volume reduction measures even to other LGUs, even as it created considerable livelihood opportunities for urban poor women. Using waste materials, the women produce a variety of crafts that they have been able to sell to both local and foreign buyers.

Freshwater Protection and Management

LGUs have to consider long-term planning on freshwater protection, management, and rehabilitation to ensure the attainment of targets involving CSOs and citizens' involvement. The decline in fish catch in the past five years is an example of the effects of overfishing and other threats to the freshwater environment. Fortunately, at the provincial level, there has been continued support for the rehabilitation of ecosystems as well as for environment-based livelihood. This has been done through the operationalization of the Project Management Offices (PMOs) for the Salug Valley Management Council (upland and lowland-based), Illana Regional Alliance (IBRA) 9 (coastal-based), and Sibugay Valley Development Council. This action has improved the management and protection of the Salug and Sibugay Valley areas, along with Illana Bay.

Economic Activities vs. Forest Resources

Denudation of forests has been rampant in Region 9. There is still large-scale illegal logging throughout the region, putting forest resources and wildlife at risk.

The rape and plunder of the forestland and its resources by unscrupulous people has led to the decline of the region's logging industry, in turn resulting in the displacement of thousands of its workers.

The scarcity of lands to till in the lowlands because of the increase in population has aggravated the situation. Human settlers have been illegally taking over parts of forestland in the area and indications are that remaining reserves exist only on paper. Still, there have been attempts by the LGUs to maintain and increase forest cover through the implementation of various projects and programs, including vigorous reforestation efforts like the community Based Forest Management (CBFM), Integrated Social Forestry (ISF), Socialize Integrated Forest Management Agreement (SIFMA), Timber-Forest License Agreement (TFLA) and Private Tree Plantation projects.

Strengthened Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

The presence of the Provincial and Fishery Council (PAFC/FARMC) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Council in three LGUs of Zamboanga del Norte have helped to monitor programs and projects to mainstream governance and restoration of aquatic and marine resources. The Illana Bay Regional Alliance (IBRA 9) has sustained the activities of the Fisheries Law Enforcement Team (FLET) to fight sea piracy and other illegal activities.

Encouraging Local People to Build Networks and Alliances

Many local folk have been inspired by the success of teamwork among LGUs such as the Illana Bay Regional Alliance and projects that needed joint efforts, like the Support to Marine Life Sanctuary of the province that saw the establishment and installation of artificial reefs. Other examples are the development of a mini-freshwater fish project like for commercial or domestic consumption and the intensive campaign for the protection and conservation of marine resources conducted by local fishery councils. Thanks to the provision of technical assistance by LGUs, coastal communities are now able to protect local natural resources while at the same time deriving financial benefits from these.

CONCLUSION

1. The scope of decentralization in four aspects (administration and governance, health and service delivery, economic development, and environmental management) has provided opportunities for plurality of actors and increased accountability of local authorities. However, there is no systematic or comparative evidence on whether increased participation in decentralized local governance generated better outputs in terms of improvements in Region 9.
2. There were positive efforts to build the professional and technical skills of local government employees and to improve internal organization and management styles of local administration through the local government leagues. But the technical capabilities of most low-income class LGUs remain inadequate, especially when it comes to crafting local legislation; most local Sanggunian personnel still do not have the knowledge and competency in a legislative tracking system.
3. The local governments assumed responsibility for the provision of services in education, health, water, sanitation, roads, social welfare, and agricultural extension. Most local authorities in rural areas often perform a range of functions directed at agriculture and rural development, environmental management, and disaster prevention and rehabilitation. The institutionalized participation of consultative bodies for citizen oversight over particular services like health councils and school boards has improved the LGUs service delivery specifically in these areas.
4. FGD respondents revealed evidence of a positive relationship between the strength of community participation and government performance. LGUs with progressive leadership play central roles in the provision of education, water, and road infrastructure. An overwhelming majority reported greater trust in local than national government and a larger number of individuals prefer the municipal government to be in charge of the overall service provision since decentralization took effect.
5. The presence of funding agencies like Eco-Gov and Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) is seen as the driving force for local development. The local bodies receive grants-in-aid from foreign funders as well as the central government agencies that are tied up with anti-poverty and social welfare programs. Outputs are closely related to availability of financial resources and LGU capacity.

6. Political leadership played an important role in shaping outcomes. Some elected officials, however, point out that they have limited influence over some personnel matters, such as deployment of teaching personnel from other municipalities for the elementary and secondary schools funded through the local school board. Even the assignment of Municipal Health and Provincial Health doctors are largely determined by the current political leaders.
7. Most local governments do not respond with equal vigor to opportunities, specifically when leaders have authority to block change mandated by higher political authorities. The recent elections opened challenges to responsible and innovative leadership as a driving force for progressive leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Management and coordination processes for budgeting and accounting** were observed to be in place in almost all LGUs. However, these processes need to be revisited and improved to be able to guarantee effective allocation and optimal use of financial resources. The HRMD must also be strengthened, with urgent action needed on (a) improving transparency in personnel recruitment and selection processes, (b) promoting stability or permanency in employment, (c) recognizing good performance, (d) promoting professional growth, and (e) installing a personnel grievance system.
2. **For resource allocation and utilization**, improvements in the areas of (a) organizational performance, (b) consultation process, and (c) management of a planning database are needed. These areas are instrumental in quality land use and development planning.

In development planning, existing measures in support of revenue generation need to be enhanced at the LGU level. This is an initial yet essential step in maximizing revenue generation potentials. The HRMD practices have to be improved, specifically in the practice of transparency in recruitment and selection, valuing stability in employment, recognition of good performance, and promotion of professional growth. The ease of being heard through a personnel grievance system is also essential. Further improvements are needed on (a) organizational performance, (b) consultation process, and (c) management of a planning database.

3. **For the civil application system**, the major challenge is the lack of local capacity for data production and collection. LGUs need to transform these into a seamless transactional process to ensure the ease of obtaining civil registry and real property documents. In terms of customer service, the LGUs have provided the necessary training on the value of courtesy and prompt servicing. Tools and equipment are also in place to better respond to clientele and other customer needs.
4. **The imperatives of quality legislation** had almost all the LGUs agreeing on the need for a legislative staff with greater competence and knowledge on legislative tools such agenda development, legislative tracking, a backstopping committee, and legislative performance.
5. **The involvement of local stakeholders in monitoring the efficient use of public resources** where local governments have a fair degree of autonomy has been stressed as important, especially in having citizen oversights in the actual service delivery. Transparent monitoring will help improve efficient allocation of resources, increase transparency in the use of public funds, and create accountability among different levels of government, as well as among local citizens.

BEST PRACTICE

Diplahan, Zamboanga Sibugay

Center for Abused Women and Children: A Multi Stakeholder Approach to Gender Concerns

Rationale of the project: The Center of Concern for Abused Women and Children in Diplahan, Zamboanga Sibugay shows the success of a multistakeholder approach in addressing gender concerns at the local level. Diplahan, an agricultural community, had been confronted with a rising number of abused women and children. Although the municipal data put the number of abuse victims at a low two percent of the total population of 35,665, concerned agencies believed the actual number could be higher, as many such cases usually go reported. The few women who brought their complains of abuse to the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) often could not be properly helped, as the municipality had no temporary shelter or any other services to offer. The nearest temporary shelter and center for abused women was the Pagadian Lingap Center in Pagadian, some 72 kilometers away.

How the project worked and its actors: The center managed by the MSWDO with funding support from the municipal and provincial government of Zamboanga Sibugay is the only one of its kind in the province of Zamboanga del Sur. Formed through the collaborative efforts of the municipal, provincial, and barangay LGUs, along with one women's organization and two religious groups, it also won the support of the congressional representative, national agencies, neighboring municipalities, and communities in Diplahan.

In 2000, the Zamboanga Peninsula Women's Solidarity Foundation of Ipil Prelature-3rd District of Zamboanga del Sur (ZPWSFI) joined the Maryknoll Fathers (MF) of Malangas in pushing for the construction of a shelter for abused women and children. They brought the idea to the Diplahan LGU, which readily committed its support to the project. This became the multistakeholder partnership that in turn gave birth to a fully functioning Center, with its own organization and community-level structures, annual budget for operations, an operations manual, and facilities and equipment, including an ambulance and a water system.

Barriers: The center's success in helping abused women attracted other similar victims even from other LGUs and made its services more sought after. This has led to a requirement for increased funding, especially for operations and community activities. The center is also facing constraints on the timeliness of other institutional support, such as in-kind donations, including clothing and food, putting pressure on its ability to provide for the basic needs of its children-clients. There is also the lack of trained personnel to handle counseling duties.

Funding: The Diplahan LGU readily gave its support to the project, effectively setting into a motion a multistakeholder strategy for addressing violence against women and children (VAWC). The LGU committed to allocate an annual budget

for the centers' staff salaries. The barangay council of Poblacion also worked for the donation of a 1,652 sq .m. lot to serve as the center's site. ZPWZFI and the Maryknoll fathers solicited and pooled funds for the center's construction. Both organizations also donated P75,000 and P100,000 respectively, for the construction.

Enabling factors: The project's successful partnership has helped it respond to the growing cases of child and women abuse by providing temporary shelter, protection, and rehabilitation services to victims. Its programs include the provision of temporary shelter, protection, and rehabilitation for women and children victims, livelihood and education services, and raising awareness on gender sensitivity, and capacities of women (DILG Report, 2005).

BEST PRACTICE

Roxas, Zamboanga del Norte

In LGU-Managed Tertiary Port: A Successful Public Enterprise in President Manuel Roxas

Rationale of the project: In January 2002, in line with the national government's policy of devolving tertiary ports to LGUs whenever possible, the LGU of President Manuel Roxas acquired the management of the tertiary Roxas port. Today the once-ill-equipped three-vessel-capacity port has become a bustling, profit-making enterprise that had even posted a 41.1 percent increase in revenues over a period of two years.

How the program worked and its actors: In 2000, after learning of the new national policy to develop port management by capable LGUs, President Roxas's mayor took the lead in lobbying for a Sangguniang Bayan (SB) or local legislative council resolution advocating for the port's turnover to the LGU. The resolution was presented to the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) general manager and Board of Directors.

The LGU lobbied hard for two years with the PPA, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), and other national agencies, to have the port's management turned over to it. In 2002, the LGU got its wish, but its takeover of the tertiary port was only the first step. President Roxas has since proved it is up to the challenge of managing its own port. In 2004, the port posted net revenues of P2,224,184 from P358,350 in 2002, or an increase of 41.1 percent. The port revenues come from usage fees and wharfage. 10 percent also come from arrastre and stevedoring services. Port services have improved with the setting up of new facilities, including a new office building with ticketing booths, arrastre accessories, public restrooms, and parking areas.

Barriers: FGDs revealed that there is still a need to conduct more training, particularly on implementing the PPA-approved port development plan to

ensure the project's sustainability. FGD participants also cited issues regarding transparency in terms of effective port revenue collection, recording and management, as well as managing port operations. The latter especially calls for knowledge and skills on a vessel's mooring and unmooring, along with those on cargo loading and unloading, land transport vehicles, and waste management and silted water dredging.

Enabling factors: The additional revenues have enabled the LGU to fund further port improvement. With more ships and companies using the port, the enterprise has also created employment opportunities. More people gained jobs and received additional income as port workers and operators of related services and business enterprises (DILG, Report 2005).

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