DOCUMENTATION OF THE BEST PRACTICES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KALAHI-CIDSS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BESAO

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Abstract

This study sought to document the Best practices of Besao in the implementation of Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services. Approaches and processes have become part of a development framework. The highlights in the evolution of processes and approaches are the changing dole-out paradigm to inclusive growth development paradigm and from the top to bottom planning to bottom to top planning. In general, the objective of KALAHI-CIDSS is: 1) Improve the responsiveness of local government to community needs; 2) Encourage communities to engage in development activities. 3) Deliver benefits to barangay residents through the individual sub-projects. KALAHI-CIDSS follows a community driven Strategy (People Centered Approach). CDD is operationalized through five-stage, three cycle community mobilization process called the Community empowerment Cycle or CEAC. The Three Cycle is progressive and was married with the existing cultural practices and this bore out Best Practices that can be adopted and pursued in the light of achieving Community Development. Implementation of KALAHI-CIDSS in Besao so far has undertaken notable implication. Findings show the following factors or practices which emerged during the implementation: 1) Inter-local Cooperation, 2) Harmonization of the KALAHI-CIDSS Processes in the Local Council Proceses 3) Adoption of the Community Plan in the Municipal Strategic Development Plan 4. Environmental Management, and 5) People's participation and empowerment through synergized efforts between the Local Government Units and the PO's and NGO's. In terms of its sustainability, the interviewees observed the following challenges: interference of politics, existing laws contradicting to the procurement process of KALAHI-CIDSS, and the continuity of functionality of the organized operation and maintenance group and the organized sector.

INTRODUCTION

The reduction of incidence of poverty has been a focus for decade among many nations says World Bank findings in 2006. Two years after, the World Bank upgraded its findings and came to a figure of about 1.29 billion people who are living in absolute poverty. Overcoming global incidence of poverty, by any measure, remains a tremendous challenge. In the Philippines, the national poverty incidence shows that more than one-third (34 percent) of the country's population, or 26.5 million Filipinos, lived below the poverty line in 2005. In 2012, poverty incidence in the country was estimated at 27.9%. The absolute figures however vary in the Geographic regions of the country. In 2002, for example, poverty incidence was 5.7% in the National Capital Region, but much higher in rural areas—reaching 49% in Region V and 57% in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The statistics on poverty incidence in the National Capital Region when compared to the Cordillera Administrative Region is quite alarming. The percentage of poverty incidence at 21% in 2006 did not decrease substantially in 2012 at 19.7%.

Approaches in the strategy of fighting poverty have contributed less in improving the reduction significantly. For instance, the ADB study conducted by Ernie Pernia and Arsenio Balisacan observed that,

"the decline in poverty rates did nothing to improve the country's notoriously inequitable income distribution. Despite the more-or-less sustained economic growth from 1985 to 1997, the poorest 20% of the population only improved their income 0.5% for every 1% growth in average income. In other words, they slipped further behind and income inequality became even more extreme."

The effects of poverty are lingering. According to Amnesty International (1995), the lingering picture demand a corresponding responsibility to respond in addressing the roots in accordance to the call for human decency as defined by legally binding international human rights obligations, instruments and standards.

CAUSES OF POVERTY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Poverty in the Philippines is a complex issue that stems from various structural defects such as in the legal system of land ownership and weak governance. Most affected populations by these structured defects are the Indigenous Peoples and those living in the rural areas.

Understanding this complex issue would be beneficial as this paper would attempt to discuss 2 salient issues, namely:

a.   Inequitable Land Distribution
b.   Low Political Leadership/Weak Governance

Inequitable Land Distribution

According to Llanto and Ballesteros (2005), access to land and productive inputs is a strong predictor for poverty alleviation. In the Philippines, the poor are strongly dependent on access to land for their livelihood and welfare. Rural Families make a living from agricultural and fisheries activities and for many urban poor families, the house serves as base for income-generating activities (e.g. food vending, tailoring, and processing of recyclable materials). Thus, sustainable economic activities that could address poverty alleviation in agriculture, the fisheries and in urban economy depend on an efficient and socially accepted distribution of land.

The Filipino people, long before the era of colonization, were subsistent but not as many were poor. Surpluses were traded with other Asian Countries.

But the picture has changed when the "Encomienda System" was introduced by the Spanish colonizers. It was this system that eventually dictated the coming out of legal structure in defining land ownership by the few wealthy while majority of the Filipinos soon became merely tenants and laborers - a factor that has contributed to the poverty in the countryside.

The legal structure was improved by the American colonizers and later incorporated in the 1935, 1976 and 1987 Philippine constitution. Attempts to remedy the structural defects came in the form of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). On June 10, 1988, Congress passed the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law. Tenanted vast lands in the lowland were the subject of land distribution to the tenants. About 80 percent of the targeted lands for distribution were accomplished up to the Marcos Administration (R.E.Dolan 1991).

Land reforms in the country have been long running but it was also enveloped with difficulty. Some of the contributory factors are lack of sustained political will, and landlord resistance.

In 1997, Republic Act 8371 or known as "the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997" is another social legislation that attempts to remedy the structural defects concerning land territories held by Indigenous Communities/ Indigenous Peoples. The law recognizes the Rights of IPs to their ancestral domains to ensure their economic, social and cultural well-being (RA 8371). This strengthened the rights of the IPs to their ancestral domains as a jump-start to productivity, employment, opportunities and poverty reduction.

In Mountain Province, for instance, terraces were carved as production areas for rice and edible plants. Land ownership is likewise dictated by one's labor where the landed few are treated as "kadangyans" but their land ownership are not being tenanted. The clash between customary and legal rights on claimed ancestral domain and lands contributed to the persistence of low productivity, unemployment and poverty.

Low Political Leadership/Weak Governance

Effective governance has been described by the United Nations Development programme (UNDP) as the "missing link" between national anti-poverty efforts and poverty reduction. Other national agencies likewise identify good governance among the pillars of their development work.

Senator Angara also accepts that there is a direct correlation between good government and economic development.

According to World Bank, good governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy embedded with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of the law, transparent processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Poor governance, on the other hand, is characterized by arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, unenforced or unjust legal systems, the abuse of executive power, a civil society unengaged in public life, and widespread corruption.

In the Philippine context, the whole meaning of public office is deferred to self-interest and interest of the few. Public Office is used to divert funds from its actual use, and this diversion diverts millions of pesos from what should be priority projects for the benefit of the greater number of people. This millions diverted disturbs the efforts aimed at economic development.

Rivas & Nael (2012) in their book quoted and stated that public office – is a public trust - it is not to be understood as a position of honor, prestige and power but a position of rendering service to the public.

Senator Angara et.al. (2005) said that the increasing petty forms of corruption in the governance system both in local and national government has marred the participation of local citizenry or the citizenry's gamble to be given little support by political leaders. Because of this Community development effort is less participated and less sustainable.

This is even explained by UNDP study that corruption has weakened national institutions, inequitable social services, and blatant injustice in the courts, along with widespread economic inefficiency and unchecked environmental exploitation. It is also evident that corruption hits the poor the hardest, who often depend heavily upon public services and natural environment and are least able to pay bribes for services that should be theirs by right.

As a result communities and families have less access to National Funds and productive assets.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION STRATEGIES

In 2000, a delegation to the United Nations crafted the Millennium Development Goal, the number one goal is to eradicate poverty this coming millennium. (United Nation, 2013). As a member of the United Nation, the Philippines adopted the MDG in response to the worldly call.

With the MDG as a guide, the government came out with processes and strategies which aimed to accelerate the eradication of poverty incidence. Approaches and processes have become part of a development framework. One of the highlights in the evolution of processes and approaches are the changing dole-out paradigm to inclusive growth development paradigm. The dole-out paradigm focused strongly on the need to meet basic needs (GHK Research and Training, 2001), while the inclusive growth development paradigm would not only met the basic needs of man but also the wholeness of man. One of the advocated calls is to pursue human development Approach defined *human development as about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And it is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means—if a very important one—of enlarging people's choices.*

This backs up the strategies like the bottoms up planning and implementation of projects. This planning and project implementation style is related to the approach locality development approach (Rothman 1979), *the basic belief is that communities have some common needs and interests and once the people realize this need and work together democratically they can take appropriate steps to improve the quality of life.*

This contradicts the widely used traditional development approach which uses the Top to Bottom planning and implementation. This approach sees community as lacking with capacity to solve their own problem. This usually results to low maximization of government projects leading to less impact to the community.

Through the years, scaling up of approaches and process has been part of changes in development concepts. It is in this definition that the government came out with the three (3) core Programs being initiated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development Office. These 3 programs are called the "TATSULO", or the Pantawid Pamilya Programs or 4P's, the KAPIT BISIG LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN (KALAHI-CIDSS) and the SLP. These Programs were implemented in selected communities like Besao, Mountain Province, Philippines.

In the exercise of prudence in implementing projects, it is imperative to capture the different innovations and unique development interventions.

Hence, documentation plays a vital role not only to display accounts of the past but also a rich source for educational purposes. Take for example the learning of Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development. The workers account that documentation of their past refreshes the earnest to cope with the respond to the challenges of the times. It is also used to gaze on the condition of the time, premises of the decisions, the opportunities and the challenges they faced, and the lasting impacts of the achievements. All this provide a better view of what went through in the past and what is required in the coming years. (PCARRD Legacy, 1973-2008).

In addition, proper documentation of events was also emphasized by Joseph (2013), as essential for providing the contemporary professionals and future generations the opportunities to know, learn, and benefit from the past knowledge and experience.

Documentation comes in the form of oral and written. However, written documents would leave a more profound meaning to men. It would be likened to a compass that would navigate the mind of the reader to a glorious escape of the activities of the past and illumines the future. And it would also be likened to the experience of Cordillera in the implementation of KALAHI-CIDSS.

Development work in the Cordillera has been long running yet has trickle less influence in the life of the family and community. Studying the best practices of the implementation of the KALAHI in Besao will open avenues to understand how development can be achieved in the Mountain Province.

As of February this year, the said community-led and community-driven poverty reduction program already has a total of P130.95 million in project grants in 288 barangays in the Cordillera. One of the recipients in the cordillera is the Municipality of Besao. This year, the town is concluding its third cycle of implementation. In 2011, the town was awarded as Best in Sub-Project Implementation because of the excellent performance of the communities. The following year, the town was likewise acknowledged as model local government unit in harmonizing participation, transparency, and accountability in governance system. The municipality is one among five other municipalities in the country that were recognized by the National Project Management Office of Kalahi-CIDSS as good performing towns (Midland Courier, February 17, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

Three different methodologies were employed to provide an overview of the implementation of the KALAHI-CIDSS in Besao. First, there was a literature review of the implementation of the KALAHI-CIDSS-Besao from 2010-2013.

Second, a series of exploratory interviews was conducted with people from selected Local Government Officials, community, volunteers such as the members of the Barangay Sub-project Management Council of the 14 Barangays of the Municipality.

Third were interviews with KALAHI-CIDSS staff/Department Social Welfare and Development staff and the stakeholders which include members of the PO's and NGO's on selected barangays who were involved in the project implementation.

OVERVIEW OF BESAO

Besao is a 5th class municipality in the province of Mountain Province, Philippines. According to the latest census, it has a population of 7,295 people in 1,735 households with a total land area of 173.62 km2 . Poverty incidence of the Municipality in 2009 is 26.9%.

Besao is presently composed of 14 barangays, namely: Agawa, Ambagiw, Banguitan, Besao West, Besao East, Catengan, Gueday, Kin-iway, Lacmaaan, Laylaya, Padangaan, Payeo, Suquib and Tamboan.

RESULTS

This research's purpose is to document the successful implementation of the KALAHI-CIDSS in the Municipality of Besao which includes the contributory factors from the community and the processes of the KALAHI-CIDSS. It revealed a great deal of promising innovations and some significant policy and practical challenges if the "innovations" potentials are to be fully realized.

The findings indicated that in the community of Besao, 98% belongs to the Indigenous People called the "Applai". Historically, the people of Besao use participative governance wherein there is a high engagement of the community and individual in the planning of the community affairs. With the entry of formal government systems, it slowly made changes in the governing affairs of the Indigenous People. It was found out that the participation of the community in the planning and implementation of development initiatives has declined within the 14 barangays. The Traditional planning and implementation approach or top to bottom planning is used. The local council determines the needs, craft the strategic plan, allocates the funds and supervises the implementation with less consultation from the community. As a result, public office is marred with suspension of corruption and public office has become a gold mine to secure power and status in the community. It was also found out that despite the clash in the indigenous governance and formal governance, the Besao People were able to sustain practices and traditions that contribute in the development of their locality given the technical and funding supports. Some of the practices preserved are the "ub-ubbo" and "galatis".

Ub-ubo is a practice where community members help each other in a completion of a certain task and this is usually done in the building of houses.

Galatis is a practice wherein the community give free labor in support of certain endeavour.

Findings indicated a number of contributory factors during the implementation that was sustained from the 3 cycles of implementation of the project. First is the inter-local cooperation wherein the barangays in the Municipality worked as one entity and casting boundaries. This was extended in terms of funds and local resources. This is rooted in the nature and practice of "ub-ubo" .

Case1. One, Barangay (Gueday) during the selection process and budgetary allocation withdraw and the Barangay and the Municipal Local Government instead funded the sub-project of the Community. Due to the withdrawal, one barangay, particularly Barangay Agawa, was included in the allocation of funding thereby able to continue the processes of KALAHI-CIDDS. Barangay Gueday implemented the project with the funding from the Municipal and Barangay Local Government using the

Second, the Institutionalization and Harmonization of the KALAHI-CIDSS CDD processes in the Local Government processes. This was underpinned by a strong legal foundation, in the form of a regulation enacted by a Local Government Council. The enactment also is an evidence of the strong involvement and support of the Local Government Unit both in the Municipal and Local Council Unit (community).

Third, the adoption community plan which is the fruit of the Participatory Situational Analysis during the Social Preparation Stage in the strategic Development plan of the Municipality and Local Council. This was enacted by the Municipal and Local Councils which formally bind the inclusion of the prioritized needs and strategies indicated in the plans. This is not only necessary but this will be an engine to drive the sustainability and further power innovations in the local community with its Local Councils as it works to implement these plans.

Fourth, the adoption of the Indigenous environmental Management and strethening of the Pos and NGO's on the implementation of the project, operation and maintenance and, sustainability. This is defined by strengthened local organizations that manage the operation and maintenance of local infrastructures which is defined by local traditions and practices. Local traditions such as "galatis" to maintain infrastructures such as the water systems, irrigations canals for protection of communities and rice farms.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND SUGGESTION

Findings also indicated a number of areas in which further work should be conducted in order to improve the processes and its implementation. First, the KALAHI-CIDSS's objective is sometimes overshadowed by the sub-project implementation instead of the community absorbing the transformational processes brought about by the program.

Second, the complexity of regulatory and compliance requirements were real barrier to volunteers considering that some of them are not college graduate. Requirements in the processes are highly technical and sometimes

cannot be grasped by the volunteers.

Third, less participation/engagement of the younger generations due to study endeavour outside the community.

Fourth, need for capacity building of volunteers and the local officials.

The above analysis shows that KALAHI-CIDSS was accepted by the community as a new technology to alleviate their community from poverty. The acceptance of this new technology is shown in the interfacing of this new technology in the existing cultural practices in the locality. This is also evident in high participation and success of the implementation. With the participation of the community in the processes, they were able to understand the real meaning of the partnership of people and its local government in achieving Community Development. To further and sustain the success of the implementation there is a need to;

a. To mainstream the processes with commitment in the Local government processes.
b. To document the best practices and to integrate this in the local processes or to scale the KALAHI-CIDSS approach.
c. To sustain the projects objectives there is a need to establish a monitoring team in the implementation of the Local community Plan which was a fruit of the Participatory Analysis and was submitted and enacted in the Municipal Development Plan.
d. To link the organizations such as the Water System Management Association and farmers Association to line agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, for technical support and to sustain the operation and organization of this groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Effectiveness of Development strategies lies in the actual implementation of the processes and their effects in the behavior of the community. It must not only be properly designed and planned by technical team and thrown to the community for implementation, but must also be sponsored and upheld sincerely by political leaders and community.

Implementation of KALAHI-CIDSS was able to give life to the Indigenous practices of community and aligning it to new technologies and innovations of the government. Through its processes community realized achievement of development as partnership endeavor.

In addition, innovations in intermarrying cultural practices and new technologies have brought out innovations counted as best practices. This includes inter-local cooperation due to practice such as "ub-ubbo" which is innate in the community.

Above all, positioning the community as stakeholders who participate in the design of delivery of services gave life as well in the development endeavors in the community. Accountability and transparency which are the key governing imperatives of the good governance was strengthened within the Local Councils. With the strengthened participation of the Local Government and its community, reducing incidence of poverty in the community/rural areas will achieved in larger measure.

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