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## Role of Non-Government Organizations in Poverty Alleviation in the Province of Northern Samar

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### Abstract

This study aimed to determine the participation of non-government organizations (NGOs) in local governance in Northern Samar. It employed a qualitative approach, specifically, descriptive-analysis.

The respondents of the study were the heads or directors of the ten purposively selected NGOs in Northern Samar, partner agencies, organized POs, and beneficiaries.

Majority of ten (10) NGOs are in the service for 10 to 15 years, served farmers, developmental type of NGO, three to five staff, covered the entire province of Northern Samar, has international funding, and their thrust is on rural development.

Almost all or nine out of ten NGOs have programs on poverty alleviation.

A total of eight problems of NGOs in participating on poverty alleviation, the topmost problem is political intervention.

There are seven recommendations raised by the informants to establish meaningful participation of NGOs in poverty alleviation, and the most recommended is to organized POs, NGOs & civic group and should submit themselves for accreditation to have high participation of governance.

**Keywords:** Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), People Organizations (POs), Civic Society Organizations (CSOs), Poverty Alleviation.

### Introduction

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have the power to influence individual behavior and the institutions that are involved in healthy diet and physical activity promotion. By collaborating with national and international partners, they can support the implementation of the various strategies of the government specifically in emergency preparedness.

In the Philippines, the role of the NGOs in improving the lives of rural poor, the partnership of civic organizations and the local government is enhanced through several joint undertakings and cooperative arrangements which include delivery of basic services, promoting livelihood projects, developing local enterprises and enhancing economic and social well-being of the people including their responsiveness during disasters.

The role of NGOs in local development should be seen as complementary and supplementary to and supportive of the efforts of local governments. This is the essence of partnership between the government and the private sector.

In addition, there are laws that exhilarated NGOs for active participation towards local governance as stipulated in Section 23, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution where the state shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that will promote the welfare of the nation. Section 15, Article XIII provided

that the state shall respect the role of independent people's organization, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interest and aspirations through the peaceful and lawful means. Likewise, Section 35, Chapter 4 of the 1991 Local Government Code provided that the local government units shall promote the establishment and operation of people's and non-government organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy. LGUs may likewise enter into joint ventures and such other cooperative arrangements with people's and non-governmental organizations to engage in the delivery of certain basic services, capability-building and livelihood projects, and to develop local enterprises designed to improve productivity and income, diversify agriculture, spur rural industrialization, promote ecological balance, and enhance the economic and social well-being of the people (Local Government Code of 1991).

However, in a preliminary interview of the researcher with the NGOs it was found out that:

- i). There are some NGOs that do not want to be accredited with local governance in Northern Samar;
- ii). There is limited participation of NGOs in local governance of Northern Samar;
- iii). There is unsustainable implementation of programs and activities among local NGOs.

Thus, the researcher is very keen in pursuing this study to thoroughly explore role of NGOs in poverty alleviation the local governance of Northern Samar.

### Objectives of the Study

This study generally aimed to identify the role of non-government organizations in poverty alleviation in local governance in Northern Samar.

Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Document the profile of the non-government organizations in Northern Samar in terms of:
  - i). Name of NGO;
  - ii). Date of incorporation;
  - iii). Date of accreditation;
  - iv). Sector served;
  - v). Type;
  - vi). Number of staff;
  - vii). Scope;
  - viii). Source of fund;
  - ix). Major thrust;
2. Explore the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation in the province of Northern Samar;
3. Identify the problems encountered by the NGOs in Northern Samar in their involvement in poverty alleviation; and
4. Draw recommendations from the respondents for effective participation of NGOs in poverty alleviation.

### Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in the province of Northern Samar. The researcher used qualitative approach specifically descriptive.

The universe of this study was the accredited non-government organizations that appeared in the official list of NGOs in Northern Samar that was secured from the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) which are active and accredited NGOs in Northern Samar. The respondents of this study were the heads or directors of purposively selected NGOs in Northern Samar. NGOs are represented by heads and directors; they are the right persons to ask about the various activities of their NGOs in partnership with the local government in Northern Samar.

Furthermore, the researcher also included at least two (2) beneficiaries and POs organized by the NGOs to confirm or disconfirm the participation of NGOs; they were selected on the basis of their availability or accessibility at the time of data collection and knowledge of the existence of the NGO in their communities. Also, the linkages of the NGOs were included as respondents

### Results and Discussions

#### Profile of the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

##### Names of the NGOs

The names of the accredited NGOs in Northern Samar are follows: Agricultural Workers and Entrepreneurs Multipurpose Cooperative (AWEMPC); Eastern Visayas Partnership for Rural Development Inc. (EVPRD); Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD); Northern Samar Children's Ministries Network Inc. (NSCMN); Plan Philippines (PlanPhil); Sacred Heart Institute for Transformative Education Foundation (SHIFT); Samar Center for Rural Education and Development (SACRED); Seed Producers Association of Northern Samar (SPANS); Sentro ha Pagpapauswag ha Pangabuhì Inc. (SPPI); and Trustland

Socialized Credit Cooperative (TSCC).

All of these have their offices in Northern Samar. Eight of them, namely; AWEMPC, CERD, EVPRD, PlanPhil, SACRED, SPANS, SPPI and TSCC, are located in Catarman, Northern Samar. NSCMN is in Lavearez, Northern Samar and SHIFT has its office in Doña Lucia, Mondragon, Northern Samar. The data imply that majority of the NGOs offices were situated in Catarman because it is the capital town of Northern Samar and the center of trades and banking industry where NGOs can easily access their needs specifically on money transactions.

#### Date of Incorporation

Among the ten NGOs, SACRED was the oldest. Formed in 1990, it already existed for 28 years. The most recent was TSCC established in 2015. It has been in service for four years only as compared to the rest which have been in service for about two decades and over. PlanPhil which is an NGO under Plan International, one of the oldest NGOs in the world and founded in Spain, reached Northern Samar in 2004.

The data imply that many of them have already contributed to the improvement of the lives of the marginalized and the environment through their package of development tools which include material and technical assistance, skills training and other empowerment-related interventions. The data further imply that more than half of the NGOs are serving more than a decade because they are supported by both local and foreign donors to sustain their projects/programs and operation.

#### Date of Accreditation

Of the ten NGOs, seven were accredited last October 2016, two were accredited December 2016 while on the same year one was accredited but on the month of January.

From the data, it can be observed that these NGOs are compliant of DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2001-89. The law provides certain requirements before NGOs and POs can engage in local governance. It requires all NGOs and POs pursuing partnership with government, under the Local Government Code of 1991, should go through a process of accreditation. The data further revealed that all of the NGOs are accredited last 2016 because it is the year where the chief executives assumed into office. As stipulated in the steps in accrediting NGOs as a pre-requisite to membership in local special bodies, the representative chosen by the accredited organization shall be co-terminus with that of the chief executive, in case of vacancy the alternative shall take over the un-expired term.

Moreover, as to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration of the NGOs, all of them claimed that they are registered on the same year of their date of accreditation. The primary purpose of SEC registration of NGOs according to some informant is to implement a microenterprise development strategy and providing microfinance programs, products, and services, such as microcredit and microsavings, for the poor and low-income clients. Also, through SEC registration they were able to accept donations or grants or contributions in accordance with existing laws and regulations; maintain a transparent and comprehensive management information system; and publish and disclose audited accounts at the end of every financial year.

#### Sectors Served

There were six (6) out of ten (10) NGOs or majority of the NGOs served the farmers. It is because the province has vast

agricultural land and most of the residents' source of living is farming. An NGO personnel said that:

*Ini nga mga parag uma an angay ta gud buligan kay magkuri ini sira.*

(The farmers are the one who really need our help because they are the poor people in the community.)

Furthermore, there were five (5) out of ten (10) or half of the NGOs served youth sector because they do believe in the saying of Dr. Jose P. Rizal that *"the youth is the hope of our fatherland"*.

SHIFT, SACRED and SPPI served women sector because they believe that women constitute the most vulnerable sector in the community. One of the NGO coordinator said that:

*Maupay nga tagan gihapon sin atensyon a kababayin-an sa kumunidad para masugad sira na empowered.*

(It would be better if we pay more attention to the women in the community so that they will be empowered.)

NSCMN, PlanPhil, SHIFT and Sacred served the children because they are one of the defenseless sectors in the community. One NGO said that:

*Kailangan tagan ta sin proteksyon an kabataan kuntra sin bisan nanu nga pag-abuso.*

(We need to protect children against any form of violence.)

SACRED, SHIFT and SPPI served the community because they do believe that if a certain community is shelled with their aid, community can manage their common affairs and solve their own problems.

CERD, SACRED and SPPI served fisherfolks because they are suffering from poverty. CERD serves fisherfolks because it is the major thrust of their NGO. Moreover, one NGO personnel said that:

*An pag bulig namu sa mga parag-isda doble an katuy-anan, una matatagan namu sira pangabugi, pan duha sirana mismo an mag babantay sa dagat kuntra sa mga illegal na buruhaton basi ma protektarankanra pangabuhi.*

(We have a double purpose in helping the fisher folks: first, we are helping them for their living; second, if they are highly dependent on fishing, they will protect the ocean against illegal activities to sustain their living.)

AWEMPC and SPPI serve the laborers where they provide livelihood to them so that they will be more resilient in the community.

Lastly, SHIFT and SACRED served persons with disabilities (PWDs) because they are considered as vulnerable who do not receive much attention from the society.

Furthermore, the sectors served of the abovementioned NGOs are considered as depressed, deprived, and underprivileged (DDU), in other words, they are the ones who really need the aid of both the government and these NGOs.

It can be gathered from the data that the farmers are the most served by the NGOs because they are considered as a vulnerable sector in the community and should be given attention. It is followed by the youth sector because they are the primary target market considering that at their young age they can do many good things for the country than other sectors. It is followed by women, children, community, PWDs, laborer and fisherfolks because they are perceived by

the NGOs to be the most vulnerable among the sectors.

The data also shows that SACRED topped among the ten NGOs when it comes to the number of sectors served, with seven, followed by SHIFT with six and SPPI with five, EVPRD, on the other hand, EVPRD, SPANS and TSCC, serves only one sector the farmers while CERD also serve only one sector the fisher folks. The data further imply that SACRED has the large number of sectors served because the NGO was established since 1990 or the oldest NGO where they were able to come-up with many programs/projects for various clienteles.

### Types of NGO

The retrieved data indicate that the ten NGO respondents are classified as development, environmental, agricultural, humanitarian and microfinance NGOs.

The data imply that since the NGOs are of different types, they serve and provide services in accordance to their major thrust as well as the sector that they serve. AWEMPC and TSCC are microfinance, agricultural and developmental because they are cooperatives where their primary beneficiaries are farmers. They train them to be more self-reliant individuals. EVPRD is developmental, environmental and agricultural NGO concerned with the social development of depressed rural communities and the development of our natural resources and environment. CERD is developmental NGO which address the needs of fisherfolks to effectively manage marine and coastal resources on which they depend on for livelihood. NSCMN, PlanPhil and SHIFT are developmental and humanitarian NGOs because they promote human welfare and social reforms specifically to children. SPANS is developmental, agricultural and microfinance NGOs because they offer a small lending for farmers. SPPI is developmental because it aims for the development of their beneficiaries where they provide livelihood, trainings, and seminar-workshops for the upliftment of their socio-economic status.

The data further revealed that ten or all of the NGOs are developmental because they contribute to the development of the community through their own development approach and focus.

Hence, nine or almost all of the NGOs are considered as local NGOs because their scope is within the vicinity of their offices, the nine (9) NGOs originated in the province of Northern Samar. However, only the PlanPhil is considered as international NGO because of its local and international linkages. The main office of the said NGO is in United Kingdom, Europe.

### Number of Staff

The number of staff of NGOs. SPANS had the smallest staff with only three, AWEMPC and EVPRD with four, SACRED and TSCC with five. CERD with eight, NSCMN with seven, PlanPhil with 21, SHIFT with 25 staff, and SPPI with nine.

This data seems to negate the notion of Padilla that NGOs which are weak in membership capacity or small membership are unable to respond to the demands and responsibilities it has assumed, resulting in internal organization dysfunctions. In this study, SPANS had the smallest number of staff, yet, it covered the entire province of Northern Samar but served one sector only. In the case of EVPRD, although it served only one sector, it covers three municipalities in Northern Samar.

Therefore, these NGOs can still manage their office with small number of staff only, it can be stated that these NGOs have "hand over the stick" to the POs which is actually the



essence of participatory governance. The people are given wider responsibilities by the GO management hence, even with a small staff they are able to serve different sectors and cover wide area.

### Scope

AWEMPC is located in Barangay Dalakit, Catarman, Northern Samar. It covers the entire province of Northern Samar or the twenty-four (24) municipalities.

EVPRD office is situated in the University of Eastern Philippines, Zone III, Catarman, Northern Samar but it covers, aside from Catarman, areas far from its office such as Mondragon, Lope De Vega, Catubig, and Calbayog. This is because EVPRD was able to establish linkages with other LGUs within and outside Northern Samar.

CERD is located in Barangay Talisay, Catarman, Northern Samar yet it covered the municipalities of San Roque, Pambujan, Mondragon, and Biri.

NSCMN is located in Barangay Ocad, Lavezares, Northern Samar. It covered the 24 municipalities. The informant said:

*Kay kada munisipyo mayda kami church partner na mga  
Born Again Christians.*

(In every municipality we have partners who are Born Again Christians.)

This implies that they were able to cover 24 municipalities because of their linkage with the Born Again Church which is headed by pastors in every municipality.

PlanPhil is located in Catarman Northern Samar and it covers Catarman, Catubig, Lope de Vega, San Roque, and Las Navas.

SACRED is situated in Barangay, Dalakit, Catarman Northern Samar and it covered the whole province except the municipalities of Mapanas, Gamay, Lapinig, San Vicente, Capul and Silvino Lobos. According to the key informant, these six municipalities are far flung municipalities where they cannot establish a project because of their location and distance. It is hard for them to conduct the implementation and monitoring.

SPANS has no permanent office as stipulated by the key informant; however, its former location is in Barangay Calachuchi, Catarman, Northern Samar. The NGO covered the 24 municipalities but served the farmer sector only.

SPPI is found in Cawayan, Catarman Northern Samar. It covers San Antonio, Capul, Lavezares, Mapanas, Gamay, Lapinig, Laoang and Pambujan.

TSCC is located in JP Rizal Street, Catarman Northern Samar. It covered the municipalities of Catarman and Bobon.

It appears that four (4) out of ten NGOs covered the 24 municipalities in the province of Northern Samar. However, the other NGOs covered almost all the municipalities in the province.

Again the data negate the notion of Padilla because despite the manpower limitation, they can still cover large geographical area. This simply implies that aside from the fact that they know how to delegate responsibilities to the communities, NGOs are manned by committed personnel who are trained to deliver effective and efficient service.

### Source of Fund

Among the ten (10) NGOs, six (6) sources of fund came from both international and government counterparts; four (4) were from local donations and share capital of the members which include membership fees and registration of every member;

two (2) from sponsors and income generated projects (IGPs)- the SPANS is selling sacks of rice as source of their fund while SHIFT is selling organic vegetables from their backyard farm, they also have hall rental and Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) enrollment.

From the data, it can be observed that 60 percent of the NGOs funds came from both international and government linkages. It can be concluded that NGOs have different sources of funds that make them sustainable and functional in achieving their goals and objectives.

### Major Thrust

Their major thrusts were determined through interviews and based on their vision, mission and goals.

AWEMPC major thrust is lending because it is a multipurpose cooperative that provides the needed services for the empowerment of its members, making them more capable in promoting agricultural development in the countryside by increasing their self-worth, capabilities profitability and efficiency.

EVPRD thrust is agriculture where the NGO intends to encourage private/public partnerships for rural communities and economic development, increase collaboration among local government units, agencies, service providers and communities in the island through agriculture and engage local government units and national government agencies in developing programs and innovative service delivery to communities.

CERD is a non-stock, non-profit development organization with major thrust on fisherfolks empowerment. The NGO is established to address the needs of fisherfolks to effectively manage marine and coastal resources on which they depend on for livelihood.

NSCMN major thrust is children's welfare where the NGO has their four (4) core programs which include:

- i). Family development session;
- ii). Youth safety;
- iii). Break the silence: sexual abused prevention and;
- iv). Alternative poster family care. So, these programs are intended for children's welfare.

PlanPhil major thrust is children welfare where their programs/projects are anchored on the said thrust which includes establishments of Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) buildings in the three municipalities of the province, education, trainings and other related activities on children empowerment.

SHIFT major thrust is Justice, Peace, Integrity and Creation (JPIC). As to the midterm report outlines some of the accomplishments along JPIC made in the year 2017/18. To mention a few highlights of the accomplishment, the foundation was able to train students, organic farming practitioners, agricultural extension workers, women, youth and farmers in various agricultural programs in its Sophie's Farm project. It was able to educate 39 children in 2017 and 45 children in 2018 from poor families using a mix of traditional and Montessori system of education. As stipulated also in their report, SHIFT provided livelihood to a group of mothers from the nearby coastal village and support families by rebuilding their homes. It was able to provide local and international volunteers from France and Australia. In addition, the NGO has heavily invested in its infrastructure projects to develop Sophie's Farm as training center for sustainable agriculture as well as provide board and lodging to people of like-minded organizations that aim to empower

people in Northern Samar.

The major thrust of SACRED is rural education and development where their vision is to establish building network of healthy, dignified, and self-generating rural communities with active participation of women and their family to sustain economic development and sound environment. Also, the NGO participates in promoting for effective and efficient health and literacy programs to rural communities; participate in the promotion of appropriate agricultural technologies and restoration of endemic varieties; and participate in the conservation and preservation of environment and natural resources.

The major thrust of SPANS is agriculture where they provide loans to the farmers for the promotion of sustainable-farming. The major thrust of SPPI is livelihood where they provide trainings, seminar-workshops to their beneficiaries so that they are able to come-up and manage their sources of revenue.

The major thrust of TSCC is lending where the NGO grants loans to their members and farmers to finance and augment their needs.

### Role of NGOs in Poverty Alleviation

Almost all or nine (9) out of ten (10) NGOs have programs on poverty alleviation. There were eight (8) it identified common projects on poverty livelihood which include:

- i). Trainings and seminar workshops on livelihood,
- ii). Agricultural livelihood program (rice production program, root crops and vegetable program, farm demonstration, Agricultural support services component),
- iii). Rural enterprise project,
- iv). Economic upliftment for urban development project,
- v). Fishery Integrated Resource Management for Economic Development (FIRMED),
- vi). distribution of fishing gears for livelihood,
- vii). Basura to Pera Project,
- viii). Seaweeds Value Chain Development.

The Agricultural Workers and Entrepreneurs Multipurpose Cooperative (AWEMPC) is a member-owned cooperative committed to serve and respond to the financial and other related technology needs of their members and beneficiaries. It is active in providing livelihood program. It is stipulated in their mission that the cooperative needs to provide the needed services for the empowerment of its members, making them more capable in promoting agricultural development in the countryside by increasing their self-worth, capabilities, profitability, and efficiency. As stipulated by the chairperson of AWEMPC, they first provide trainings and seminar workshops to the farmers before they grant the loan so that these farmers will be more knowledgeable in business and can pay their loans to the set timeframe by the cooperative.

The Eastern Visayas Partnerships for Rural Development, Inc. (EVPRD) contributed to poverty alleviation of the rural people through its Rice Production Program. It has 1,500 beneficiaries in Catubig Valley funded by JICA, PhilRice and the local government. The said program aims for the sustainability of rice production for the farmers. Furthermore, the EVPRD has program on sustainable agriculture. It facilitates farm planning along organic farming and adoption of biodiversity-enhancing technologies in upland and lowland agriculture. Also, the NGO has a program on capacity development wherein trainings are conducted to enhance skills of CSOs members along project development and

management, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation and enterprise development. As mentioned by the Centralized Farmers Association (CEFA)-Cablangan president.

*Mayaun sira nahibulig sugad san pagdevelop sa amon mga pangabhan, sugad san abaca plantation. Tikang sa pagplantasyon, amon iton na develop na magin business namu na primary nga pangabuhi sa among mga members.*

(They help us in our livelihood which include abaca plantation. From plantation, we develop it and make it a form of business which is the primary source of living of our members). The statement implies that EVPRD has improved their way of living through trainings conducted.)

The informant also added,

*Since tikang kami sa farmers yana nag business na kami, nakikipag engage na kami didto sa GBA-Leyte sa dagko na negosyante. An amo pagdeliver diri la didi sa middle man kundi didto na sentro gud, an pinakahatas na trader.*

(We started being a farmers but now we can considered ourselves as businessmen. We sell our products to GBA-Leyte, a big company. We are not only delivering our product to the middle man but directly to the traders).

The statement clearly affirmed that EVPRD plays a vital role in the improvement of livelihood among their beneficiaries. The Samar Center for Rural Education and Development, Inc. (SACRED) has six (6) completed projects on poverty alleviation. These are community organizing- WESAMAR Program, which is intended to ensure that CBOs have the capacities to effectively manage their micro and macro projects through continuous CO and capability-building activities; economic upliftment for urban development project which is intended to provide alternative livelihood to 12 organized urban poor; livelihood development program which aims to increase consciousness on self-reliance and entrepreneurial activities and to implement and manage group micro-enterprise; skills training cum production for workers and rural enterprise project; HELEN-Agri-Livelihood Development program intended to increase beneficiaries' literacy rate and to provide financial assistance to implement their identified household agri-livelihood projects and to provide technical skills on organizational productivity and cottage industries; and HCAAP agricultural support services component intended to increase the agricultural productivity thereby increasing farmer's income and alleviating the poverty incidence in the project area.

The Sentro ha Pagpauswag ha Pangabuhi, Inc. (SPPI) has four (4) poverty alleviation projects to wit: seaweeds value chain development where it provides capital to seaweed farmers to get them started with their farm module; root crops and vegetables program which is intended to train farmers in organic farming and production of organic fertilizers to provide the farmers with sustainable farming technologies. Another program of SPPI is food-processing which is intended to train beneficiaries in proper food-processing. Lastly, is "basura to pera", with this project, the people do not only earn income from solid waste management but they also have learned how to manage their solid waste.

The Sacred Heart Institute for Transformative Educational Foundation (SHIFT) has its ten-point development agenda contained in their handbook. One of the development agenda is on "mainstreaming and scaling-up of poverty alleviation

initiatives". The said NGO has also different poverty alleviation programs and activities such as training for the farmers and modified conditional cash transfer project for 600 families, and developed Sophie's Farm as a demonstration farm for income generating endeavors in small farms/backyard organic farming training program. The informant also added that,

*Sa mga 40 households, kasali yung bahay, tinulungan sila, meron silang sewing project dito, nagbackyard garden, may baboyan, may tindahan may diversified livelihood projects.*

(We also gave different projects to the 40 households. We help them to have sewing project, backyard gardening, swine production, and sari-sari store where we offered diversified livelihood projects.)

This implies that the NGO is not only providing farming livelihood but also other sources of income. The informant also clarified that the fund of the project was not taken from their NGO where he said,

*Ni-link lang naming sila sa NSDWCC, gumawa kami ng isang community, ang funding para sa livelihood, inilalagay namin sa NSD, doon na sila uutang kasi wala kaming capacity para sa micro finance. So, andoon ang pondo sa NSD, doon sila nangungutang.*

(We are linking them to NSDWCC. We are creating one community where the funding of their livelihood is borrowed from NSDWCC.)

The Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD) has livelihood program titled "Fishery Integrated Resource Management for Economic Development (FIRMED)". The program facilitates the formation of fisherfolk organizations at the barangay and municipal levels. The program helps enable coastal communities engage in sustainable fisheries management, policy advocacy, and livelihood development. In addition, this program employs a multi-disciplinary approach and integrates development component like community organizing and capacity building, household organizing, gender mainstreaming, sustainable fisheries development, livelihood development, and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Moreover, CERD has program on social enterprise development which includes social enterprise capacity building, biodiversity-friendly enterprise, value chain study; market study and market development, and business planning. Furthermore, aside from the abovementioned livelihood activities of CERD, they also provide fishing gears and equipment to their POs. The informant said,

*Pina agi sa CERD, ma request sira sa gobyerno net, patitig, tapos mga nylonkun nanu man an gin gagamit didto sa paghulaw, kun nanu amo request mau man lat an kanra gin hahatag.*

(Through CERD, they are requesting from the local government fund to purchase nets, nylons and other fishing gears. They granted our request.)

Which means that the CERD is the initiator of providing fishing tools and equipment to their beneficiaries to upgrade their livelihood.

The Trustland Socialized Credit Cooperative (TSCC) as an open-and-close type of cooperative is active in livelihood program using same technique employed by AWEMPC. They

also grant loans to the farmers and their members. Prior to granting of loans, they also provide seminars and workshops to the grantees to assure that the money will be utilized effectively and efficiently.

The Seed Producers Association of Northern Samar (SPAN) has a program on livelihood through their SPAN small lending where they let farmers borrow money from them to provide the necessity of these farmers. According to the informant, they also provide seeds and fertilizer for the farmers with corresponding trainings and seminar-workshops on farming technology transfer.

The Plan Philippines (PlanPhil) informant said that all of their undertakings along DRRRM, health, socio-economic empowerment, and child protection in support the poverty alleviation programs of the government.

Thus, from the data, it can be gleaned that almost all or nine NGOs are dynamic in poverty alleviation except the NSCMN.

### Problems Encountered by the NGOs

NGOs play a vital role towards the development of the province because its collaborations with the local government of Northern Samar. However, achieving a harmonious participation of NGOs in local governance is not easy. There are some factors that can become constraints in achieving it.

A total of eight (8) constraints in achieving harmonious participation of NGOs in the province of Northern Samar emerged after associating the responses of the key informants, determining similarities, grouping and modifying categories. These constraints are:

- i). Political intervention;
- ii). Lack of coordination between LGU and NGO;
- iii). Lack of LGU support;
- iv). Lack of budget/fund;
- v). Lack of community participation;
- vi). Lack of technical skills;
- vii). Office location and;
- viii). Delay in the release of fund.

Of the eight issues and concerns, the number one constraint is "political intervention". Most of the informants said that political partisan primarily hinders their participation in local governance. One of the informants said,

In Northern Samar, political partisan is rampant which should be avoided whatever the political affiliation of your NGO, because there are some NGO who support certain politicians and if you are not supporting them they will tag you as a foe and will not support your NGO.

The statement implies that there are NGOs who are politically affiliated while some politicians do/will not support some NGOs because they have some loyal NGOs supporting their political career. Another informant said, Our politics is very dirty and expensive which results to local government units seeking for funds and getting a big amount from it.

One of the informants who raised this problem was a candidate for a Sangguniang Bayan Member post in Catarman. His answer confirmed that political partisan really affects the performance of NGOs.

Hence, the result negates the notion of the father of classical public administration Woodrow Wilson on the dichotomy of politics and administration where he stipulated that politics and administration are closely related but distinct from each other. In other words, public administration "lies outside the proper sphere of politics."

Ranked two on the problem encountered is "lack of coordination between LGUs and NGOs". The informants



stipulated that although they are accredited, they are not given opportunity to voice-out their issues and concerns as NGO in the province. One of the informants said,

We also encountered that we were there during the planning and budgeting but they neglected us during the implementation of the program.

The statement clearly shows that there is lack of coordination between the LGU and the NGO. Based on the theory of Salisbury, there should be mutuality of interest in a group in order to be a viable entity. This problem is affirmed by the theory of citizen participation which provides private individuals an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process.

Ranked three of the problem is "lack of LGU support". An informant said,

There is a weak partnership, LGU only tap NGO when they need our support or help not for a long term partnership.

The statement implies that there is insufficiency on the support of LGUs to NGOs specifically on their long term plans. The informant said that they are just tapped by the LGU when they need their support but not on the regular implementation of a certain program/project.

Ranking fourth among the problems is "lack of budget/fund". The informants added that,

There is no agency that do not have problem in fund.

Although these NGOs are funded by both local and international donors, still, there is deficiency of fund that hinder and affect the implementation of their programs/projects. Budget crises are a special consideration in problem recognition, as they often trump other problems. Budgets play effective role in achieving organizational strategic goals. In this sense, budgets are ways through which one can reach the goals set. In budget development process, one tries to foresee whether strategic goals can successfully be reached or not. Budgets set standards to achieve goals and can help in evaluating the fluctuations occurring during the year and try to ascertain the reasons from deviating in achieving the defined goals. So, these NGOs implement their projects/programs based on their available resources.

Another problem encountered is "lack of community participation". The informants cited some instances where their beneficiaries are not actively participating in their programs/projects. This problem is affirmed by Vroom expectancy motivation theory which assumes that behavior results from conscious choices among alternatives whose purpose is to maximize pleasure and to minimize pain.

Sixth among the problems is "lack of technical skills". It is observed that these accredited NGOs have small number of employees that run the operation, hence, there is insufficiency in the manpower. The problem is pinned to Vroom when he realized that an employee's performance is based on individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities.

Another problem is "office location" where two of the ten NGOs have no permanent office. The former office of SPANS was situated at Barangay Calachuchi-Catarman, Northern Samar, however, as mentioned by the NGO's president, they do not have office right now, while the NSCMN office is situated in the residential house of their president.

The least problem encountered by the NGO is the "delay of fund". According to them, sometimes, the delay of the counterpart of the LGUs and other partner agencies causes delays in their program/projects too.

## Recommendations for Effective Participation of NGOs in Local Governance

There are seven (7) recommendations forwarded by the informants to establish meaningful participation of NGOs in local governance. The recommendations are:

- i). Organized POs, NGOs & civic group should submit themselves for accreditation to have high participation of governance;
- ii). LGU should recognize and give POs and NGOs an opportunity to be highly involved in governance;
- iii). Avoid local partisan politics/political intervention;
- iv). Every NGO should follow proper protocol before engaging in community activities;
- v). Organize and institutionalize LGUs-NGOs networking to meet the need for transparency, accountability and support system;
- vi). LGU should have regular meeting with NGOs to establish harmonious relationship; and
- vii). Establishment of NGOs Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with their partner agencies.

It appears that most NGOs recommended for organized POs, NGOs and civic groups for accreditation to have high participation of governance so that they can easily raise the issues and concerns of the sectors where they belong. Another common problem recommended by the respondents is that the LGU should give opportunity and recognize POs and NGOs to establish high involvement of governance so that NGOs and they can easily establish linkages with the LGU. The LGU should also have regular meetings with NGOs to establish harmonious relationship. This finding suggests that a clear and open communication between the LGUs and NGOs is needed for a more successful joint undertaking. Moreover, if the recommendations will be followed, the active involvement of the NGOs in local governance will be highly practiced and observed.

## Conclusions

All NGOs have vision and mission to empower the people, most particularly the marginalized. Also, the NGOs are efficient because they can perform their job despite the constraints on resources and manpower.

Almost all or nine (9) out of ten (10) NGOs had programs on poverty alleviation. This implies that the NGOs were very dynamic in uplifting the socio-economic status of their beneficiaries for them to become more resilient and self-reliant in the community.

However, achieving harmonious linkages between NGOs and local governance is not just easy for. There are factors to be considered as constraints in achieving it.

The recommendations generally offer solutions to the identified constraints. This implies that the NGOs are able to identify possible solutions to address the problems and to create great camaraderie between NGOs and local governments.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- i). There were only ten (10) accredited NGOs in the province of Northern Samar. The LGUs of Northern Samar (LGUs) in collaboration with the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) should encourage NGOs to submit themselves for accreditation so that they can have representations not only in the local

development council but also in other local special bodies in which there is lack or no representation from the NGOs. In this way, participatory governance can be fully realized.

- ii). There were NGOs with moderate and limited participation on the extent of local governance. The provincial office of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) should regularly update the NGOs on matters affecting their partnership with the local government through fora or meetings.
- iii). One of the issues raised by an informant is weak partnership of NGOs and LGUs. Hence, NGO-LGU connections must be institutionalized. This linkage must be anchored on the principle of transparency and accountability so that they can establish strong support and partnership.
- iv). NGOs must provide their own office where they can be located. This recommendation is based on the difficulty experienced by the researcher in locating some NGOs because they do not have proper offices. Some have their offices in the residence of their respective focal person.

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