

# Needs Assessment for Improved Local Governance in Samar: Basis for the Development of Extension Programs

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## ABSTRACT

Despite ranking among the top 10 poorest provinces in the Philippines for two decades, Samar Island Province has the potential for a brighter future. This study, conducted by Samar State University's Samar Island Center for Good and Local Governance (SICGLG) in collaboration with the Graduate School Master of Public Management Program, identified key areas for improvement within Local Government Units (LGUs) through surveys and focus groups. Prioritizing accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness, the study paves the way for a comprehensive capacity-building program. This program will equip LGUs with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in these crucial areas, ultimately leading to improved service delivery, resource utilization, and a more empowered and prosperous Samar community.

**Keywords:** Poverty, Local Governance, UNDP, Extension Programs, Needs Assessment

## INTRODUCTION

Good governance is widely recognized as a critical factor for achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty (UN, 2015). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defines good governance as encompassing eight core principles: participation, consensus orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equity and inclusivity, and the rule of law (UNDP, n.d.). These principles ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive, resources are used effectively, and the needs of all citizens, particularly marginalized and minority groups, are considered (OHCHR, 2021). Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between good governance and social trust, life satisfaction, peace, and political legitimacy (Ghosh & Siddique, 2015; Rose-Ackerman, 2016; Rothstein & Teorell, 2008). Additionally, good governance practices directly improve life evaluations by fostering an environment of trust and enabling people to participate actively in shaping their communities (Ott, 2010).

However, achieving good governance remains a significant challenge for many countries, including the Philippines (UNESCAP, n.d.). Corruption, a persistent obstacle identified by the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2018 (WEF, 2018), continues to hinder progress. Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index consistently ranks the Philippines poorly, with a score of 33 in 2022 indicating a "perceived" high level of corruption in the public sector (Transparency International, 2023). While the Philippines has implemented anti-corruption laws, such as the Republic Act No. 6770 or the Ombudsman Act of 1989, weak enforcement mechanisms limit their effectiveness (Asian Development Bank, 2016). A 2019 study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) found that bureaucratic red tape, lack of political will, and weak investigative capacities within government agencies

all contribute to the difficulty of prosecuting corruption cases (PIDS, 2019).

This underscores the critical importance of strong local governance. Local governments are often at the forefront of poverty reduction and development initiatives, delivering essential services and programs directly to citizens (UNDP, 2020). However, they frequently face significant challenges related to limited technical expertise, weak institutional structures, and inadequate financial resources (UCLG-ASPAG, 2021). Creating an enabling environment that addresses these limitations is essential for empowering local governments to achieve greater impact and contribute more effectively to national development goals (UNDP, 2020).

Samar Island Province in the Philippines exemplifies the challenges of achieving good governance and its impact on poverty reduction. For the past two decades, it has consistently ranked among the ten provinces with the highest poverty rates in the country (PSA, 2016). Recognizing this critical issue and the importance of strong local governance, Samar State University established the Samar Island Center for Good and Local Governance (SICGLG). This initiative reflects the university's commitment to academic social responsibility and its belief in the transformative power of good governance to alleviate poverty and combat corruption (Astin & Astin, 1993; Guerrero, 2019).

The Samar Island Center for Good and Local Governance (SICGLG) aims to empower local government units (LGUs) on Samar Island by providing a comprehensive suite of capacity-building initiatives. These initiatives include essential services, educational programs, and leadership development workshops, all designed to promote the eight core principles of good governance established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (UNDP, n.d.). These principles encompass participation, consensus orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equity and inclusivity, and the rule of law. Through a commitment to collaboration, SICGLG will work with various stakeholders to conduct thorough needs assessments within LGUs. This collaborative approach, which includes the Graduate School Master of Public Management Program, will ensure that SICGLG's targeted extension programs are both community-based and demand-driven, directly addressing the specific needs and priorities identified by the communities they serve (World Bank, 2015).

By assessing the capabilities of LGU officials and functionaries, this study will provide a critical foundation for developing effective and targeted community extension programs. These programs, grounded in the principles of good governance outlined by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (UNDP, n.d.), will directly address the specific needs identified by LGUs. Empowering LGUs with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to implement good governance practices is essential for achieving sustainable development and poverty reduction (UNDP, 2019). Research suggests that effective local governance fosters economic growth, improves service delivery, and promotes greater social equality, ultimately contributing to improved living standards for citizens (World Bank, 2017).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a mixed methods design utilizing an explanatory sequential approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this design, the quantitative data is collected and analyzed first, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data to explain or expand on the quantitative findings (Johnson et al., 2017).

The quantitative component consisted of a descriptive survey design (Polit & Beck, 2017) to assess the good governance needs of communities in four municipalities on Samar Island: San Jose De Buan, Marabut, Zumarraga, and San Sebastian. The survey instrument was a questionnaire checklist anchored on the eight core principles of good governance established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

(UNDP, n.d.). These principles include participation, rule of law, consensus orientation, equity and inclusivity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, transparency, and responsiveness.

A random sample of 380 community members (household heads) was selected from these four municipalities. Respondents were presented with structured questions in the questionnaire, allowing for standardized data collection. Data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means (Bryman & Cramer, 2011).

Following the analysis of the survey data, the qualitative component involved focus group discussions (FGDs) with officials from the four target municipalities' Local Government Units (LGUs). During the FGDs, the researcher presented the key findings and outputs from the survey to LGU officials. These discussions aimed to gain deeper insights into the quantitative results, explore the contextual factors influencing good governance needs, and potentially identify any discrepancies between community member perceptions and LGU perspectives (Morgan, 2019).

This explanatory sequential mixed methods design allows the study to leverage the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The survey provides a comprehensive picture of community priorities regarding good governance, while the FGDs offer contextual understanding and stakeholder perspectives that can illuminate the quantitative findings (Greene, 2018).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The assessment outcomes were presented from two different viewpoints. First, the findings of the needs assessment concerning community empowerment were highlighted. Second, insights from consultations with community officials were also incorporated, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the results.

**Table 1: Community Needs Assessment for Good Governance**

Area	Mean	Rank	I
Participation	3.67	8	N
Rule of Law	4.1	6	N
Consensus Oriented	3.78	7	N
Equity and Inclusiveness	4.15	5	N
Effectiveness and Efficiency	4.3	3	HN
Accountability	4.7	1	HN
Transparency	4.18	4	N
Responsiveness	4.5	2	HN

Mean Range	Description	Interpretations
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not Needed
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Least Needed
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral	Neutral
3.41 – 4.20	Agree	Needed

4.21 – 5.00      Strongly agree      Highly Needed

Table 1 summarizes the eight areas identified by community members as needing improvement in local governance services. The results reveal that **accountability**, **responsiveness**, and **effectiveness and efficiency** emerged as the top three priorities. These areas represent a strong desire for increased transparency, timely service delivery, and optimized resource allocation. While these are the most pressing needs, the table also highlights the importance of improvement across all eight good governance principles established by the UNDP (UNDP, n.d.).

### Accountability

Accountability is arguably the most crucial pillar of community strength (Grønhøj & Ibsen, 2015). It fosters trust, fairness, and ethical behavior within a community (Uslaner, 2008), which are essential ingredients for collaborative problem-solving and collective growth (Newton, 2011). Holding individuals accountable for their actions promotes a sense of responsibility and builds healthy relationships (Rothstein, 2005). This, in turn, strengthens community cohesion and fosters a sense of shared purpose (Woolcock, 2001).

Furthermore, accountability mechanisms that encourage transparency and clear consequences for actions contribute to a more predictable and just environment within the community (Newton, 2011). This predictability lays the foundation for progress and development by reducing uncertainty and encouraging cooperation (Uslaner, 2008). Ultimately, a community built on a foundation of accountability is more resilient and thrives in the face of challenges (Grønhøj & Ibsen, 2015).

Fostering a strong sense of accountability is arguably the most crucial pillar of community strength in the Philippine context (Manalang, 2019). A historical legacy of weak institutional accountability has eroded public trust and hampered development efforts (Manalang, 2019; Torres, 2013). Rebuilding this trust requires a focus on transparency, fairness, and holding individuals accountable for their actions.

Accountability strengthens communities by promoting ethical behavior within local governance structures and fostering trust between citizens and officials (Manalang, 2019). When community members feel their leaders are held responsible for their actions, it fosters a sense of shared responsibility and encourages collaboration on critical issues (Torres, 2013). This collaborative spirit is essential for tackling complex challenges many Filipino communities face, such as poverty, environmental degradation, and disaster preparedness (World Bank, 2020).

Furthermore, robust accountability mechanisms that ensure consequences for unethical behavior and reward positive contributions create a predictable and just environment (Manalang, 2019). This predictability encourages cooperation and investment within the community, ultimately leading to a more resilient and thriving Filipino society (World Bank, 2020).

### Responsiveness

A hallmark of a thriving community is responsiveness – the ability of individuals and institutions to promptly and effectively address the needs and concerns of its members (Alata et al., 2018; Potapchuk & Noveck, 2017). This responsiveness acts as the fuel that propels a community forward, fostering trust, collaboration, and, ultimately, well-being.

Responsive communities prioritize open communication, characterized by regular information sharing, accessible channels for voicing concerns, and feedback mechanisms that ensure community voices are heard (Alata et al., 2018; Potapchuk & Noveck, 2017). Equally important is active listening by leaders, demonstrating a genuine commitment to understanding community needs and priorities (Gaspar, 2018).

These practices cultivate trust and confidence among community members, strengthening relationships and fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity (Alata et al., 2018).

A responsive community can effectively adapt to changing circumstances (Alata et al., 2018). This might involve innovative solutions to address emerging issues or flexible approaches to resource allocation based on evolving priorities. Responsive communities are also better equipped to resolve conflicts constructively. When leaders demonstrate a willingness to listen and address concerns, it fosters collaborative solutions and prevents tensions from escalating (Gaspar, 2018).

Ultimately, by being responsive to its members' needs, a community fosters resilience and well-being for all (Alata et al., 2018; Potapchuk & Noveck, 2017). A responsive community creates a supportive environment where individuals and families feel empowered to contribute and collaborate towards common goals. This collaborative spirit strengthens the community's ability to navigate challenges and build a more secure future.

In the dynamic context of the Philippines, where communities often grapple with complex challenges like poverty, natural disasters, and social inequalities (World Bank, 2020), responsiveness is the lifeblood of a thriving community. Responsiveness refers to the ability of individuals and institutions within a community to promptly and effectively address the needs and concerns of its members (Alata et al., 2018).

A responsive Filipino community prioritizes open communication, with regular information dissemination in local languages through accessible channels (Alata et al., 2018). This includes barangay assemblies, community radio announcements, and culturally appropriate social media platforms. Furthermore, active listening by local leaders, particularly barangay captains, is crucial for understanding the nuances of community needs and priorities (Gaspar, 2018). These practices cultivate trust and confidence among community members, strengthening relationships and fostering a strong sense of "Bayanihan" (community spirit) and inclusivity (Alata et al., 2018).

By being responsive to the needs of its members, a Filipino community can effectively adapt to a constantly changing landscape (Alata et al., 2018). This might involve innovative, culturally relevant solutions to address emerging issues like climate change or livelihood shifts. Additionally, responsive communities are better equipped to navigate conflicts constructively through traditional mechanisms like "pangkat ng tagapamagitan" (mediation groups) alongside formal legal channels (Gaspar, 2018). When leaders demonstrate a willingness to listen and address concerns, it fosters collaborative solutions and prevents tensions from escalating.

Ultimately, a responsive Filipino community fosters resilience and well-being for all its members (Alata et al., 2018). By working together to address challenges and pursue common goals, the community creates a supportive environment where individuals and families feel empowered to contribute and collaborate towards a more secure future. This collaborative spirit builds upon Filipino communities' inherent strength and capacity to overcome adversity.

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Within the context of community governance, effectiveness and efficiency emerge as a critical engine of progress, ranking highly among resident needs in the assessment. Effectiveness ensures that a community achieves its desired goals, whether in social welfare, infrastructure development, or economic growth (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Efficiency focuses on optimizing resource utilization and minimizing waste in the pursuit of these goals (Stoker, 2006). Together, these principles enable a community to leverage its resources and efforts to their fullest potential.

A community maximizes its impact within available constraints by prioritizing effectiveness and efficiency. This allows it to address challenges and meet resident needs in a timely and sustainable manner (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Effective and efficient governance fosters a sense of accomplishment and trust within the community, contributing to its overall success and well-being (Stoker, 2006).

The Philippine context highlights the vital role of effectiveness and efficiency in community governance, as evidenced by their high ranking in your needs assessment. Effectiveness ensures that a community achieves its desired goals, whether in social welfare, infrastructure development, or economic growth – all crucial areas for progress in the Philippines (World Bank, 2020). Efficiency focuses on optimizing resource utilization and minimizing waste in the pursuit of these goals (Stoker, 2006). These principles empower Filipino communities to leverage their resources and efforts to their fullest potential.

The Philippines faces a complex development landscape, with limited resources and pressing social and economic needs (World Bank, 2020). By prioritizing effectiveness and efficiency, communities can maximize their impact within these constraints. This allows them to address challenges like poverty, infrastructure deficiencies, and disaster preparedness in a timely and sustainable manner (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Effective and efficient governance fosters a sense of accomplishment and trust within the community, contributing to its overall success and well-being, ultimately building a stronger Philippines (Stoker, 2006).

The assessment reveals a clear call for strengthened community governance. Residents have prioritized three areas for significant improvement: accountability, responsiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency. A strong emphasis on accountability underscores the community's desire for leaders who are held responsible for their actions. Responsiveness highlights the importance of timely and effectively addressing community needs and concerns. Finally, effectiveness and efficiency point towards the community's aspiration for optimizing resources and achieving desired outcomes. By addressing these top priorities, community leaders can build a more transparent, responsive, and impactful governance system, ultimately fostering a more vital and vibrant community.

Several fundamental principles, which reveal Neutrality based on the needs assessment result, are crucial for fostering a healthy and thriving society (Gaspar, 2018). These principles, including transparency, equity and inclusivity, rule of law, consensus orientation, and participation, build a strong and inclusive community.

Transparency ensures that information is readily available in local languages through accessible channels (Gaspar, 2018). This open access to information promotes trust and accountability among citizens and their leaders, echoing the Filipino value of “pakikisama” (respect for social relationships). When community members feel informed and involved, they are more likely to participate actively in decision-making processes, strengthening the “bayanihan” (community spirit) that Filipinos are known for.

Equity and inclusivity ensure that all individuals have equal access to opportunities, resources, and services, regardless of background or identity (Gaspar, 2018; World Bank, 2020). This fosters a sense of belonging and social cohesion within the community, aligning with the Filipino “sama-sama” (togetherness) concept. When all voices are heard and valued, it leads to more informed decision-making and a stronger sense of collective ownership over community initiatives.

The rule of law ensures that laws are applied fairly and consistently within the community (Gaspar, 2018). This provides a framework for resolving disputes peacefully and upholding “katarungan” (justice) for all. A strong rule of law fosters stability and predictability, which are essential for attracting investment and promoting economic development in the Philippines (World Bank, 2020).

Consensus orientation encourages collaboration and compromise among diverse stakeholders within the community (Gaspar, 2018). This collaborative approach facilitates decision-making processes that reflect the community's collective interests, resonating with the Filipino value of "pagkakaisa" (unity). By working together and seeking common ground, communities can find solutions that address the needs of all members.

Participation enables individuals to engage in civic life actively, empowering them to contribute to the development and governance of their community (Gaspar, 2018). This active participation strengthens the community's social fabric and fosters a sense of "kapitbahay" (neighborliness) within Filipino communities.

These core principles are interdependent and mutually reinforcing (Gaspar, 2018). Transparency builds trust, which in turn encourages greater participation. Equity and inclusivity ensure that all voices are heard, contributing to a consensus-oriented approach. The rule of law underpins the commitment to transparency, equity, and inclusivity. By prioritizing these neutral needs, communities can create a strong foundation for a more democratic and inclusive Filipino society where all members can thrive.

### **Focus Group Discussion with Local Government Unit Officials**

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2015) identifies eight key pillars of good governance: participation, rule of law, consensus orientation, equity and inclusivity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. These principles form the bedrock of a community where all stakeholders can flourish.

Following a needs assessment in your community, a discussion process with Local Chief Executives (LCEs) and other community officials revealed specific needs and priorities (refer to the specific results from your assessment here). By integrating these needs with the UNDP's framework, a roadmap for a more just and prosperous future can be developed.

#### **A). Enhancing accountability through leadership training**

The focus group discussions (FGDs) with Local Chief Executives (LCEs) and community officials highlighted a crucial aspect: the need for leadership capacity building, particularly at the barangay level. Barangay officials serve as the frontliners of all government services and efforts, placing them in a critical position for community development.

Research supports this notion. Strong leadership, as highlighted by Kellough & Zhan (2013), plays a pivotal role in fostering effective responses within communities. While strong leadership does not guarantee success (Yukl, 2019), its absence often hinders progress. Investing in leadership development programs empowers barangay officials with the skills and knowledge necessary to act as effective change agents. This, in turn, fosters collaboration, resourcefulness, and a sense of ownership within the community, ultimately leading to a more successful and sustainable future for all.

This was illustrated through the following statements.

1. "Usa ko na nakikita na kaloyahan ha aton pan-gobyernohan ghap amo an dire marigon nga kapasidad hit aton mga kapitan hin pagpapahamtang han ira mga sebisyo ngadto ha mga mulupyoy. Hinawot kunta na matigayon ta nga mahitagan ine hin atensyon para mapabaskog it ira kapas para hamtang it ira serbisyo. (*The weakness on capability of our captain [Barangay] in delivering their services to the communities is what I observed one of the problems. Hopefully, this will be addressed and be given attention to help them be capacitated to strengthen their capability on becoming accountable leaders.*)  
[Key Informant 3]
2. "Kinahanglan gud talaga na it aton mga liderato, ine'n abtik hit pagpapatuman hin mga programa

ngan balaod para hin pagpapa-uswag han kamutangan han aton mulopyo. *(It is important for our leaders that they should be adept on implementing programs and policies that wil promote the welfare of the communityl)*” [Key Informant 5]

### **B). Enhancing responsiveness through capability-building on workplace ethics**

While accountable leadership is crucial, effective governance in Filipino communities extends beyond this principle. Local Government Unit (LGU) functionaries also play a critical role in service delivery and citizen engagement. Their skills and work ethic directly impact program implementation and resident participation.

LGU functionaries act as a crucial bridge between national policies and on-the-ground implementation (Manalo, 2018). Their role is essential in ensuring programs are adapted to their communities’ specific needs and contexts. By empowering LGU functionaries, communities can maximize the impact of national initiatives at the most granular level. This empowers them to tailor programs to local situations and challenges, ultimately leading to a more effective and responsive approach to governance.

Investing in the capacity and well-being of LGU functionaries is an investment in the future of the community. A skilled, empowered, and citizen-centric workforce translates to effective service delivery, increased participation, and, a thriving Filipino society. By focusing on these areas alongside accountability, Filipino communities can build a strong foundation for good governance and a brighter future for all.

This was supported with the following statements

1. “Ha pagkayana, usa gihap ine na problema na ginkakaatubang hit magkaduru-dilain na mga opisina ine nga malain na imresyon hit pagdumara hit mga cleyente. Dapat gihap ine matagan hin solusyon kay dire ka ine karubaan hit usa na opisina kundi han bug-os nga munisipyo. *(As of now, it is also one of the challenges faced by different offices the bad impression in handling clients. This should be addressed and given attention for it will not only affect a particular office, but the entire municipality as well.)*” [Key Informant 4]
2. “Mas mabuti rin sana kung mai i-train ang ating mga officials para magkaroon sila ng magandang relasyon maging sa kanilang mga cleyente at mga katrabaho *(It would be better if we could have a training also for our officials so they could have good relationship with their clients and colleagues)*” [Key Informant 2]

### **C). Enhancing effectiveness and efficiency delivery services**

The recent focus group discussions (FGDs) with LGUs highlighted the importance of effectiveness and efficiency in governance. These principles are fundamental for optimizing operational processes and ensuring the successful delivery of services to citizens (Manalo, & Lim, 2019). Effective and efficient governance acts as a bridge between policy formulation and tangible impact within communities (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). By streamlining processes and optimizing resource allocation, LGUs can maximize the positive outcomes of government initiatives.

The FGDs suggest that providing training programs focused on effectiveness and efficiency can empower LGUs to achieve good governance (refer to the specific findings from your FGDs here). This training can equip LGU functionaries with the knowledge and skills necessary to streamline workflows, optimize resource allocation, and leverage technology to improve communication, data management, and service delivery (Manalo, 2018; Manalo, & Lim, 2019).

By prioritizing training in effectiveness and efficiency, LGUs take a crucial step towards achieving good



governance. Through these efforts, communities can unlock the potential for improved service delivery, resource utilization, and ultimately, a more responsive and prosperous future for all. Investing in the capacity and well-being of LGU functionaries is an investment in the future of the community. A skilled, empowered, and citizen-centric workforce translates to effective service delivery, increased participation, and ultimately, a thriving Filipino society.

This was illustrated through the following statements.

1. “Ine na aton mga officials gihap labi na gud ha barangay level, dire gud ine hira sugad ka informed parti han proseso ngan pagpapa uswag may kalabutan han mga negosyo. Maupay kunta gihapon mabuligan ine hira hiton nab utang. (*Our officials, especially in the barangay level is not really that informed in the processes concerning businesses. It is encouraged that they should be capacitated on that area as well*)” [Key Informant 3]
2. “Sana magkaroon din tayo ng mga training para mapalawak ang kaalaman ng ating mga opisyalis tungo sa pagkakaroon ng mas epektibo at mas mabilis na pagbibigay ng mga serbisyo sa kanila (*Hoping that we should have activities that will enhance the knowledge of our officials towards effective and efficient service delivery to them [clients]*)” [Key Informant 5]

## CONCLUSION

The findings from this study, particularly the emphasis on accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness, reveal a strong desire for improved governance within Samar communities. To address these needs, the Samar Island Center for Good and Local Governance, in partnership with the Graduate School Program on Master of Public Management, has a unique opportunity to establish itself as a valuable partner.

The Center and Graduate School program can equip LGUs with the tools and knowledge they need to excel in these crucial areas by developing a comprehensive capacity-building program beyond a singular focus on leadership training. This program could encompass leadership development workshops, service-oriented work ethic training for functionaries, and programs focused on process optimization and technology integration.

A collaborative approach that prioritizes these areas has the potential to unlock significant benefits for Samar. Equipping LGUs with the necessary skills and knowledge will translate into improved service delivery, resource utilization, and, ultimately, a more responsive and prosperous future for all Samar residents. By working together, the Center, Graduate School program, and LGUs can establish a strong foundation for good governance in Samar, paving the way for a brighter future for the entire community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment of community empowerment and suggestions from community officials highlight key areas for improvement in achieving good governance within Samar. Here are four key recommendations for the Samar Island Center for Good and Local Governance (SICGLG) and the Graduate School Program on Master of Public Management in developing their extension programs:

1. *Multi-Tiered Capacity Building*: Implement a comprehensive capacity-building program that caters to both community officials and LGU functionaries. This program should include leadership development workshops for officials, focusing on ethical decision-making and effective resource allocation. For functionaries, workshops on service-oriented work ethic can foster a more responsive and citizen-centric approach to service delivery.

2. *Optimizing Service Delivery*: Offer extension activities promoting efficient and effective service delivery at the barangay level and beyond. “Ease of doing business” workshops can equip LGU functionaries with the knowledge and skills to streamline processes and reduce red tape for residents.
3. *Harnessing Technology*: Consider incorporating training programs on technology integration within the capacity-building program. This can equip LGUs with the skills to leverage technology for improved communication, data management, and service delivery, ultimately enhancing efficiency and transparency.
4. *Expanding the Reach*: To achieve good governance across Samar, consider expanding the scope of extension programs to encompass a more comprehensive and wider range of LGUs within the province. This broader approach will ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated effort towards achieving good governance throughout Samar.

By implementing these recommendations, the SICGLG and the Graduate School program can establish themselves as valuable partners in empowering LGUs and fostering a culture of good governance within Samar communities.

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