

Analysis of Capacity Development Agenda on the Devolution Transition Plans of Local Government Units in Southern Philippines

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Abstract

This research investigated the imminent full devolution of services in the Philippines following the “Mandanas-Garcia Ruling” in 2018 and concretized by the E.O 138 in 2021, which augments local governments’ share in national tax revenue, bolstering their capacity and accountability. This study focused on the southern part of the Philippines, specifically examining Local Government Units’ (LGUs) preparedness for expanded responsibilities. Employing a document analysis approach, the research evaluated the LGUs’ capacity status and delineated common and unique Capacity Development (CapDev) agendas in infrastructure, tourism, health, social welfare, and agriculture. Findings indicated that LGUs currently exhibit “low capacity,” signifying a basic capability of 20–39%, necessitating substantial interventions from national government agencies. The matrix of CapDev agendas underscored shared needs among LGUs. The study concluded by proposing indicative CapDev priorities to assist LGUs in prioritizing interventions effectively. This research contributed valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with the devolution process in the Philippines, with implications for policy and practice in local governance.

Keywords: Full devolution, local governments, capacity development agenda (CapDev), Mandanas Ruling, devolution transition plan (DTP)

INTRODUCTION

The prioritization of a capacity development agenda in local government units (LGUs) is crucial as it ensures that these entities possess the necessary skills and resources to effectively manage devolved functions, fostering improved service delivery, efficient governance, and successful implementation of the decentralization initiative mandated by the Mandanas Ruling.

The impending full devolution of services in the Philippines in 2022, spurred by the Mandanas

Ruling, marks a significant milestone in the nation's pursuit of decentralization. This judicial decision holds the promise of addressing longstanding financial inequities among LGUs and enhancing their capacity, transparency, and accountability (Flora, 2021). The ruling, originating from the Mandanas-Garcia petition, signifies a culmination of efforts by LGUs and stakeholders to secure greater autonomy and resources from the national government. This shift entails an increased share of national tax revenue for LGUs, as well as a transition from the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) to the National Tax Allotment (NTA) (Flora, 2021).

The financial implications of the Mandanas ruling are substantial, with the IRA witnessing a 55 percent surge in the 2022 budget, reaching Php1.08 trillion, equivalent to 4.8 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This represents a significant leap from the 3.5 percent of GDP allocated in 2021 (DILG, 2021). While this shift empowers LGUs with increased rights, authority, and responsibilities, it simultaneously poses challenges for the national government, as the reduction in resources could impact the overall national budget (DILG, 2021).

In response to the Mandanas ruling, President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed Executive Order No. 138 (E.O. No. 138), paving the way for the full devolution of services to LGUs. This executive order, coupled with its implementing rules and regulations, mandates the preparation of Devolution Transition Plans (DTPs) by provinces, cities, municipalities, and villages. These plans, formulated in collaboration with relevant National Government Agencies (NGAs), serve as a roadmap for LGUs as they assume devolved functions and services (Meniano, 2021).

As the deadline for the submission of local DTPs passed in November 2021, the actual implementation of full devolution is set to commence in 2024 (DILG, 2021). However, concerns have arisen, particularly regarding the financial and technical capacity of LGUs to absorb re-devolved mandates while maintaining complete autonomy. A World Bank report highlights the potential for underspending by local governments, risking a significant gap in service delivery during the transition. Weak coordination between national and local governments, coupled with insufficient implementation capacity, may impede the smooth progress towards increased decentralization, according to World Bank.

Recognizing the potential challenges, an effective capacity development plan is crucial to minimize disruptions in delivering devolved basic services. This plan should encompass personnel training, ensuring technical proficiency to manage and deliver various devolved programs and projects (PAPs). The need for capacity building and training interventions for LGUs has been emphasized since the enactment of the Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A. No. 7160). Thus, the current juncture presents an opportune moment for governmental, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions to respond to this imperative through a comprehensive capacity development analytics.

Currently, there is a limited body of literature and conducted studies that specifically assess the quality of government service delivery in the Philippines brought by the Mandanas-Garcia ruling, encompassing factors such as the capacity status and preparedness of LGUs to undertake additional functions across various sectors. Recognizing this gap, the present study aims to fill this lacuna by providing a comprehensive examination of these aspects.

This research aims to shed light on the key components and strategies required for successful capacity building in the context of the impending devolution, contributing to the effective implementation of the Mandanas ruling and the broader decentralization agenda in the Philippines.

Review of Literature

Devolution across the Globe

The global trend towards devolution, driven by demands for democracy and economic decentralization, has been observed across various regions and countries such as China, the USA,

Brazil, India, Mexico, and Europe (Rodriguez-Pose & Gill, 2003). Devolution involves the transfer of power, resources, and responsibilities from national to local governments, encompassing fiscal, administrative, and political dimensions (Litvack et al., 1998). Proponents argue that devolution enhances local decision-making and resource control, while critics express concerns about potential reductions in support for public needs and the influence of neoliberal philosophy (Carson & Wadham, 2001; Christensen & Lægveid, 2002).

Schneider and Netting (1999) highlight issues related to policy differences, resource allocation priorities, and the protection of vulnerable populations in devolution attempts. In the Philippines, concerns about the challenges posed by devolution to social welfare and the ability of local government units to absorb devolved functions have been raised, questioning the appropriateness of this approach (Borlagdan et al., 1993; Poblador, 2000). This study aims to address gaps in the literature and contribute to understanding the impact and challenges of devolution, particularly in the context of the Philippines.

Devolution in the Philippines

The Philippines, historically governed from Manila, underwent a significant shift with the Local Government Code of 1991 (LGC), a pioneering devolution effort challenging the central control paradigm (Abueva, 1997). Despite constitutional assurances of local autonomy, remnants of the “center knows best” mentality persisted, potentially impacting the LGC’s formulation and the extent of devolved responsibilities and resources (Brillantes, 1998).

Scholars like Brillantes (1997) consider the LGC a success, emphasizing case studies, while critics, including Guevara (2000), argue that central government influence persists, citing the enduring ‘pork-barrel’ funds. The devolution initiative was aimed to eradicate Marcos’ legacy to foster democracy, local empowerment, and national progress (Pimentel, 1993; Brillantes, 1998a).

Capacity of LGUs

The methods used to develop and carry out public policy are referred to as governance. It involves decisions, negotiation, and various power relations amongst stakeholders to determine who receives what, when, and how. It is the product of interactions, relationships, and networks between the various sectors (government, public sector, private sector, and civil society). Governance is the act or process of ruling with authoritative direction or control, according to Boysillo (2017). The process of governance is not based on control but rather on coordination; it involves both the public and private sectors, and it is not a formal institution but rather ongoing interaction (Keping, 2017). Building excellent governance requires a strong commitment to transparency and accountability. Information disclosure and policies put into effect by the government or other institutions are provided by transparency (Taufiq, 2015).

One of the tools used in the assessment of good governance is the so-called Local Good Governance Index (LGGCI). The study of Amoroso et al. (2020) had elucidated on this good governance index. It was found in their study that the rating of “Very Satisfactory” in one of the LGUs in Camarines Sur does not mean that the government is compliant with all the parameters required by the said index, in fact study revealed that there were vital ordinances needed to be enacted and approved. In the in-depth study of Orcena (2019) entitled “A ‘Paradox’ of Governance Performance: The Case of Barangay 872, Manila, Philippines”, in spite of the Barangay Council’s “strengths” in governance and administration, as demonstrated by the Council’s self-assessed performance reports and “claims,” the author came to the unhappy conclusion that these areas have, unfortunately, fallen behind. Due to the organization’s inadequate resources, the LGU’s stagnated agriculture, and the weak support of government units, among other limiting factors, economic development is the “weakest performing” governance performance sector. Various studies on environmental management have concluded that this particular service area is not usually complied at the barangay level. There are selected barangays in a highly urbanized city that performed well in the various areas of barangay governance, except in

the area of environmental management (Monocay & Mejica, 2020; Flores, 2020) brought about by some residents who are not concerned enough and non-cooperative in managing their own wastes and garbage.

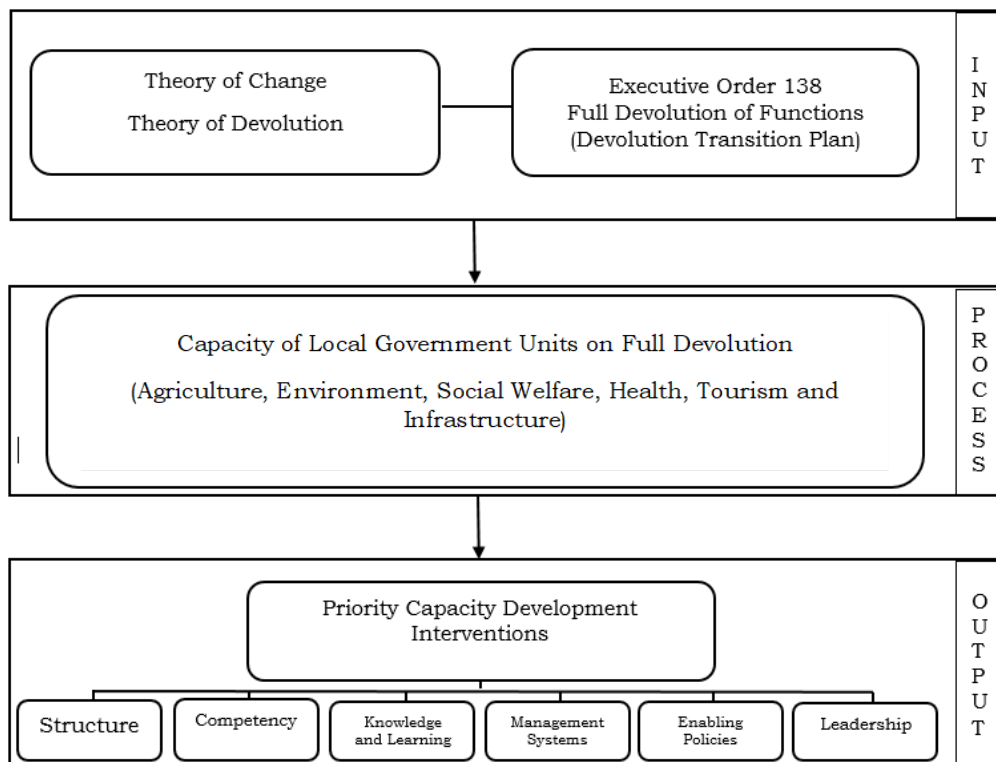
Finally, the recent study of Basaluddin (2021) concluded that the different factors adversely affecting the administrative capability of some LGUs in Sulu, Philippines were the scarcity of resources, inadequate training, insufficient political support, poor inter-governmental coordination, and lack of accountability on the part of the local elective officials.

Framework of the Study

In exploring the dynamic landscape of local governance, particularly in the context of southern Philippines, it is essential to construct a conceptual framework that serves as the blueprint for our analysis. This framework is designed to dissect and understand the intricate process of capacity development and its pivotal role in the devolution transition plans of LGUs. By systematically examining the elements of capacity development - such as the different service areas and capacity development interventions, within the backdrop of the LGUs' devolution experiences, we aim to uncover the underlying mechanisms that drive the progress on full devolution. This investigation is not only crucial for the local context of the present study's locale but also illuminates broader insights into the challenges and triumphs of governance at the grassroots level.

The schematic diagram shows that the study employs the input-process-output (IPO) model for organizing variables. The IPO model is a functional graph that lists the inputs, outputs, and steps in the processing chain required to turn an input into an output. Sometimes, the model is constructed to take into account any process-related storage. The inputs are the outside flow of information and supplies into the activity. All tasks are necessary to transform the inputs in the processing stage (Alshaye et al., 2019).

Figure 1. Schematic Diagram on the Capacity of Local Government Units on Full Devolution



The inputs for the study are the theoretical and legal underpinnings, which are the theory of change, theory of evolution, and E.O. No. 138, respectively. E.O. No. 138 sets forth the national standard for formulating DTPs at the local level. From the inputs, the capacity of LGUs on full devolution will be processed using a capacity matrix tool that is patterned after the national DTPs, as provided in E.O. No. 138.

As an output of the study, it develops priority capacity interventions to help the LGUs assume the devolved services. The CapDev interventions were crafted in consonance with the six (6) LGU capacity pillars: structure, competency, knowledge, and learning; management systems; enabling policies; and leadership (LGA, 2016).

Structure pertains to the presence of appropriate structures like office, committee or work group with defined authority and accountability for performing the necessary functions within a program. Formally established and functional structures are some of the indicators.

Competency pertains to the knowledge and skills of people who need to perform their assigned functions in the program. This may include technical competencies and program management competencies like planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluation.

Knowledge and learning pertain to mechanisms for generating, analyzing, and using data and information as a basis for decision-making and continuous improvement. This means that data or databases, including the M & E data, are accessible to and used by stakeholders.

Management systems pertains to the systems, processes and procedures for managing programs. It emphasizes that systems, processes and procedures must be documented, approved for implementation, practiced, standardized, streamlined, user-friendly/ customer-focused, participatory, and transparent.

Enabling policies pertains to the presence of policy and legislative support for planning, developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating service delivery functions, programs and projects. Enabling policies should be in place, sufficient, up to date, disseminated, and enforced.

Leadership pertains to the presence of mechanisms for defining vision, mission and values, and setting. It also includes strategic directions, ensuring transparency and accountability in the LGU's operations, instituting participatory mechanisms, establishing partnerships and collaboration, and visible sponsorship of programs.

Objectives of the Study

1. Determine the LGUs' capacity status in the following service areas:
 - a. Agriculture
 - b. Environment and Natural Resources
 - c. Social Welfare
 - d. Health
 - e. Tourism; and
 - f. Infrastructure;
2. Determine all the common and unique capacity development (CapDev) needs across all service areas; and
3. Provide an indicative capacity development priority needed by the LGUs.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research method with a quantitative design was used in this study. A document analysis approach was also used to assess the LGUs' readiness for full devolution. The primary data

capturing tool comprises the Capacity Matrix Tool (CMT) and the Capacity Criterion Matrix (CCM), each uniquely constructed for the different service areas. Using a document analysis approach, the CMT, modeled after the roles and performance goals specified by the relevant NGAs in their National Devolution Transition Plan and presented during the regional roll-out, was used to determine and rate the LGUs' capacity.

The primary data sources comprise the devolution transition plan (DTP's) of the LGUs, including the annexes. On the one hand, secondary data sources mainly covered laws, statutes, policies, programs, and other related issuances. Secondary data covering the different sources provided the essential preparation for the CMT and CCM. This secondary data also facilitated cross-checking the function assumed by the LGUs and the programs, activities, and projects (PAPs) aligned with the CapDev interventions.

The capacity of the LGUs to handle the full devolution of the various service areas was evaluated in this study using a 5-point Likert scale. Each function or indicator has criteria developed specifically for the qualifying statement and based on the national standards found in the DTPs and the legal foundation. This is because, as the governing rules or regulations specify, each role has specific criteria. To determine the capacity, the researchers computed the fundamental descriptive statistics.

In conducting this research, ethical considerations were paramount, given the exclusive utilization of a document analysis approach without human participants. The study adhered to stringent principles of data privacy, ensuring the confidential and secure handling of information extracted from documents, thereby upholding the highest standards of ethical research practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reassessing the functions of the LGUs in the different service areas, such as agriculture, environmental and natural resources, social welfare, tourism, health, and infrastructure, one will notice that there were areas of incompleteness and inefficiency. Some functions of the NGAs are completely assumed or performed by the LGUs. These incomplete assumptions and performances of functions by the LGUs may result in the ineffective and inefficient delivery of basic services and needs of the constituents as mandated by Sections 16 and 17 of R.A. No. 7160 and Article X of the 1987 Constitution.

The succeeding paragraphs will particularly discuss the three objectives of the study. First objective dwells on the capacity status of the LGUs. Second objective delves on the common and unique CapDev needs of the LGUs. Third and last objective elucidates on giving guide to the LGUs in setting their priority programs, projects, and activities.

1. Capacity Status of the Local Government Units

Table 1 illustrates the overall capacity status of the LGUs on the different areas as mentioned above.

A scrutiny on Table 1 shows that the LGUs gained a mean score of 2.034279 or low capacity. This low-capacity status implies that the said LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20–39%, in implementing the devolution requirements. These would only mean that said province urgently needs major interventions from the appropriate national government agencies to capacitate them on all functions assumed by the local government units and the corresponding PAPs. Failure on the part of the national government to execute needed financial and technical knowledge would defeat the purpose of full devolution, resulting in the wastage of public funds. The process of governance is not

Table 1
Overall Capacity Status on the Different Service Areas

Service Area	Mean	Qualitative Capacity	Qualifying Statement
Agriculture	2.817815	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Environment	1.80	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Social Welfare and Development	1.912142	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Tourism	1.93	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Health	1.99	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Infrastructure	2.53	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	2.034279	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

based on control but rather on coordination; it involves both the public and private sectors, and it is not a formal institution but rather an ongoing interaction (Keping, 2017). Thus, there is an urgent need to solidify the linkages of NGAs, LGUs, and the different stakeholders.

Table 2 below further illustrates the capacity status of the LGUs on Agriculture.

Table 2
Capacity Status on Agriculture

Functions to be assumed	Mean	Qualitative Description	Qualifying Statement
Crops	2.52375	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Livestock	3.29909297	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Credit and Financing	2.259047619	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Research and Extension	3.037777778	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	2.817815571	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

In terms of PAPs on Agriculture, capacity status is “moderate capacity” (MC) with a score of 2.817815571. This capacity shows that LGUs already have the legal capacities to perform activities relative to the PAP but still need to build sufficient resources. These findings imply that the LGUs still need reinforcements from the concerned NGAs, specifically the Department of Agriculture. LGU’s with low agricultural performance, and the weak support from concerned government agencies, among other limiting factors, had largely contributed to weak agri-economic development (Orcena, 2019).

Table 3 below specifically delved on the capacity status of the LGUs on environmental management.

Table 3
Capacity Status on Environment

Functions to be assumed	Mean	Qualitative Description	Qualifying Statement
Ecological Solid Waste Management	2.54	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Functions devolved such as inspection through survey and monitoring of the following air pollution sources: Conduct water quality monitoring of all water bodies (rivers, lakes, coastal) within their jurisdiction.	1.45	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0 - 9%, in implementing devolution requirements.
Survey and Monitoring of Water Pollution Sources	1.93	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Establishment and operationalization of MRF by providing necessary logistical and operational support in line with the national policy guideline.	2.00	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Establishment and operationalization of Sanitary Landfill	1.9	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	1	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
	1.80	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

As can be gathered from the table above, the LGUs gained “no capacity” with a score of 1.80. These findings mean that the LGUs have a very little to no capacity or 0 – 19% in implementing the devolution requirements. These results imply that there is an urgent need for major reinforcements. Various studies on environmental management have concluded that this particular service area is not usually complied at the local level. There are selected LGUs in some highly urbanized cities that performed well in the various areas of governance, except in the area of environmental management (Monocay & Mejica, 2020; Flores, 2020) brought about by some residents who are not concerned enough and non-cooperative in managing their own wastes and garbage.

Table 4 describes the capacity status of the LGUs on Social Welfare and Development.

As shown on the Table 4, LGUs gained the “low capacity” with a score of 1.91214286. These findings clearly show that the LGUs have basic and limited capacity in implementing the devolution requirements. This highlights the need for the LGUs to strengthen and make more efforts with the requirements of full devolution. These results imply that the LGUs also need the dire needed assistance from the concerned government agencies. Considering that these are newly devolved functions to the LGUs, these results do not connote negativity on the part of the LGUs; rather, they call for the dire support of the concerned NGAs to the LGUs. As enshrined in the declaration of state policies, social

service and health are among those valued services needed to be delivered efficiently and effectively by the LGUs (Art. 2, 1987 Constitution).

Table 4

Capacity Status on Social Welfare and Development

Service Area	Mean	Qualitative Capacity	Qualifying Statement
Agriculture	2.817815	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Environment	1.80	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Social Welfare and Development	1.912142	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Tourism	1.93	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Health	1.99	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Infrastructure	2.53	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	2.034279	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

Table 5 below illustrates the Capacity Status of the LGUs on Tourism. Note that the LGUs have also gained “low capacity”.

Table 5

Capacity Status on Tourism

Function to be assumed	Mean	Qualitative Capacity	Qualifying Statement
Agriculture	2.52375	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Livestock	3.29909297	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Credit and Financing	2.259047619	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Research and Extension	3.037777778	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	2.817815571	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

Based on the table above, the LGUs have garnered “low capacity” with a score of 1.93. In other words, they have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements. These results imply that the LGUs badly need the interventions from the concerned NGA, specifically the DSWD and DOH. Considering that these are newly devolved functions to the LGUs, these results again do not connote negativity on the part of the LGUs; rather, there is a pressing need of concerned

NGAs to the LGUs. This is similar to the finding on the different factors adversely affecting the administrative capability of some LGUs in Sulu, Philippines which were the scarcity of resources, inadequate training, insufficient political support, poor inter-governmental coordination, and lack of accountability on the part of the local elective officials (Basaluddin, 2021).

Table 6 below illustrates the Capacity Status of the LGUs on Health. It should also be noted that the LGUs have gained “low capacity”.

Table 6

Capacity Status on Health

Function to be assumed	Mean	Qualitative Capacity	Qualifying Statement
Health facilities enhancement program	2.03	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Epidemiology and Surveillance	1.4	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Human resources for health (HRH) deployment	2.37	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Public health programs and services	2.18	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Commodities	2.16	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	1.99	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

The table above clearly indicates that the LGUs garnered “low capacity” with a score of 1.99. In other words, they have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements. These results imply that the LGUs badly need the interventions from the concerned NGA specifically the DOH. Considering that these are newly devolved functions to the LGUs, these results once again do not connote negativity on the concerned LGUs. Instead, the support of the concerned NGAs to the LGUs is needed. Studies showed that policy incoherence, unresponsive food system, climate impacts, planning gap, governance and service delivery gaps, lack of resources, implementation gaps, weak accountability for ending hunger and malnutrition, are among those factors which lead to incapacity of the LGUs (Briones et al., 2017).

Table 7 explains the Capacity Status of the LGUs on Health. It should also be noted that the LGUs have gained “low capacity”, the same with tourism, health, and social welfare and development areas.

Based on Table 7, the LGUs have also garnered “low capacity” with a score of 2.53. In other words, they have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements. As implied in the previous table, these results imply that the LGUs badly need the interventions from the concerned NGA, specifically the DSWD and DOH. Considering that these are newly devolved functions to the LGUs, these results once again do not connote negativity but a call for action on the part of the concerned NGAs.

Table 7*Overall Capacity Status on Infrastructure*

Function to be assumed	Mean	Qualitative Capacity	Qualifying Statement
Roads and Bridges	2.80	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Waterworks	2.80	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Drainage and Sewerage	2.80	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Flood Control	2.00	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Seawalls	1.60	No Capacity (N.C.)	LGUs have very little to no capacity, or 0-19%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Other Infrastructure Facilities	3.20	Moderate Capacity (MC)	LGUs have some existing and enabling capacity, or 40-59%, in implementing the devolution requirements.
Overall Mean	2.55	Low Capacity (L.C.)	LGUs have basic and limited capacity, or 20-39%, in implementing the devolution requirements.

Common and Unique Capacity Development (CAPDEV) Needs

This study also identified the “common and unique capacity development needs” of the different LGUs in Southern Philippines. This was accomplished through comparative document analysis of the capacity development interventions of the LGUs as stipulated in their respective DTPs, side by side with the laws and statutes related to each function to be assumed by the LGUs.

The table below illustrates the “common and unique capacity development needs” in agriculture, environment, social welfare and development, tourism, health, and infrastructure.

Table 8*Common and Unique Capability Development Needs*

Functions	Common	Unique
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobby to S.B. for the promulgation of Municipal Ordinance for regulatory and certification of seedling nurseries - Ordinance for the Creation of Plantilla for Technical Personnel - Enactment of appropriation ordinance for the acquisition and construction of buildings (Artificial Insemination Centers, Animal Breeding Stations, Fishports and Landing Centers, Slaughterhouse, and other institutional structures) - Budget allocation for the acquisition and establishment of area and maintenance of production centers - The hiring of well-trained personnel to man the desired centers or structure - Strong linkages with the appropriate agencies and other NGOs, both local and foreign, for the sustainability of the programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancement of existing municipal agricultural production area designated as integrated Agri-techno demo project complex for the establishment of Municipal Seed Farm and Seedling Nursery and facility with equipment - Coordinate with BFAR for possible interventions - Formulate a plan for livestock production areas in the SAFDZ - Coordinate ACPC for partnership on the initiation of orientation meetings and information campaigns on ACPC credit programs

Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct training/workshops and updates on related laws about the environment. - Proposal of an ordinance by MENRO to S. B. - Creation of ordinance for plantilla positions - Allocation of funds for plantilla positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage all barangay to establish communal composting areas in every sitio - Institutionalization thru the adoption of Bulawanong Barangay as an ordinance
Social Welfare and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of additional plantilla positions to be assigned under the MSWD Office - Proposal of ordinance for the creation of recovery and rehabilitation program for trafficked persons by the MSWDO to S.B. (enabling policies) - Continued participation in social welfare-related training of additional J.O. (competencies) - Create S.B. Resolution creating policies on referral to Malasakit Centers (enabling policies) - Coordination with national line agencies in the conduct of related training, workshops, and seminars (competency) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construct 12 CDCs Child-Friendly Facilities - Conduct Team Commitment Building to Personnel (Knowledge and learning) - Allocate the 5% budget from 50% of the 1% Budget of PWD for assistive devices & financial assistance in the LDP (structure) - Periodic survey and assessment of FRVA in the nine barangays every three years starting from 2024 onwards
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Execute E.O. Assigning permanent employee as Tourism Officer to designate who do not have multiple designations, Hire/Assign Job - Lobby to Provincial Tourism Office for Technical Assistance, attend training/workshops related to the competencies needed and Conduct benchmarking among P/LGUs with successful tourism. - Establishment of a Mun Tourism Office - Appropriation of Funds, Provision of Office Space, Procurement of Office Equipment and Supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion in the identified PPAs to be included in LDIP and AIP (Catarman) - Creation of a database containing all relevant tourism-related information in the Municipality - Preparation of New Site Development Plan of AHSR; Preparation of DED and POW; Construction of old AHSR into a new tourist destination; Development of Sagay Cold Spring (Mambajao)
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of an existing Rural Health facility - The hiring of new personnel as a DSO - Creation of an Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit - Equipping personnel through conferences, training, short courses, and program updates - Purchase of drugs and medicines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of a Super Health Center - Adoption of a feedback mechanism - Promoting existing personnel from Nurse 1 to Nurse II positions for DSO - Hire Doctors to the Barrio (DTTB) - Create plantilla position for IT/Computer Operator - Create plantilla for ambulance driver
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction and maintenance of Municipal and other local roads and Bridges - Provision of small water impounding projects and other similar projects, like rainwater collectors and water supply systems - Declogging/desilting of canals - Construction/Rehabilitation of Flood Control/ Dikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction Improvement and Rehabilitation of Local Access Roads - Training and Workshops for Surveying Activities and Other Activities Related to Construction Methods - Provision of Surveying and Heavy Equipment - Preparation of DED for the construction, improvement, and rehabilitation. of Local Access Roads

Note. Above mentioned CAPDEV needs were extracted from the Capacity Development Agenda of the LGU (LGU-DTP Annex G-1), Inventory of LGU Functions, Services, and Facilities (LGU-DTP Annex E-1), Phasing of Full Assumption of Devolved Functions, Services, and Facilities (LGU-DTP Annex F-1).

Indicative Capacity Development Priorities

Based on the findings of the LGUs’ capacity status, the “common and unique CapDev needs” in different service areas, and also taking into consideration the income classes of the LGUs in Southern Philippines, the Indicative CapDev Priorities were developed and will be offered to the LGUs. The prioritization is based on the mean scores accrued in every function to be assumed and the common and unique CapDev needs. The functions with the lowest capacity status and the common CapDev interventions will be considered priorities.

The table below illustrates the appropriate CapDev Interventions and timelines for each of the service areas of agriculture, environment, social welfare, and development, tourism, health, and infrastructure.

Table 9

Indicative CapDev Priorities

Service Areas	Capability Development Interventions	
Agriculture	- Enactment of S.B. Resolution for the promulgation of Municipal Ordinance for regulatory & certification of seedling nurseries	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the Creation of Plantilla for Technical Personnel	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the acquisition and construction of buildings (AI Centers, Animal Breeding Stations, Fishports and Landing Centers, Slaughterhouses, and other institutional structures)	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Allocate funds for the acquisition and establishment of area and maintenance of production centers	- 1st Quarter 2023
	- Hire well-trained personnel to man the desired centers or structure	
	- Establish strong linkages with the appropriate agencies and other NGOs both local and foreign, for the sustainability of the programs	- 2022-2024 - 2022-2024
Environment	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for Plantilla positions; allocation of funds for plantilla positions - Conduct training/workshop and updates On related laws concerning the environment	- 2 nd Quarter 2022
Social Welfare and Development	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the additional plantilla position to be assigned under the MSWD Office	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the creation of recovery and rehabilitation program for trafficked persons by the MSWDO to S.B. (enabling policies)	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Enactment of S.B. Resolution creating policies on referral to Malasakit Centers (enabling policies)	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Participate in social welfare-related training of additional J.O. (competencies)	- 2022-2024
	- Coordinate with the national line agencies in the conduct of related training, workshops, seminars (competency)	- 2022-2024
Tourism	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the creation of a permanent position as Tourism Officer	- 2nd Quarter 2022
	- Lobby to Provincial Tourism Office for Technical Assistance, attend training/workshops related to the competencies needed, and Conduct Benchmarking among P/LGUs with successful tourism.	- 2022-2024
	- Appropriate Funds, Provision of Office Space, Procurement of Office Equipment and Supplies	- 2022-2024
Health	- Enactment of S.B. Ordinance for the creation of an Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit	- 3rd Quarter
	- Allocate funds to purchase drugs and medicines	- 3rd Quarter
	- Hire new personnel as a DSO	- 3rd Quarter
	- Allocate funds for the improvement of an existing Rural Health facility	- 2022-2023
	- Conduct series of conferences, training, short courses, and program updates to equip the personnel technically	- 2022-2023
	- Allocate funds to purchase drugs and medicines	- 2022-2024

Infrastructure	- Allocate funds for the construction and maintenance of Municipal and Local Roads and Bridges	- 2022-2024
	- Allocate funds for the provision of small water impounding projects and other similar projects, rainwater collectors, and water supply systems	- 2022-2024
	- Appropriate funds for the Declogging/desilting of canals	- 2022-2024
	- Allocate funds for the construction/rehabilitation of flood control/dikes	- 2022-2024

Note. Above mentioned CAPDEV needs were extracted from the Capacity Development Agenda of the LGU (LGU-DTP Annex G-1), Inventory of LGU Functions, Services, and Facilities (LGU-DTP Annex E-1), Phasing of Full Assumption of Devolved Functions, Services, and Facilities (LGU-DTP Annex F-1).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the findings of this research illuminate key insights into the analysis of capacity development agenda of the LGUs in this study’s locale, which are as follows:

1. The assessment of the different service areas to be assumed by the LGUs using the Capacity Matrix Tool and Capacity Criterion Matrix revealed that the capacity status of the LGUs in Southern Philippines is low or limited in terms of implementing the devolution requirements to be assumed functions in the different service areas. Hence, the LGUs have to secure more adequate resources to effectively and efficiently deliver services to the general public.
2. The matrix on common and unique capacity development interventions also proved that the different LGUs in the province have common and unique needs. Generally, LGUs are in the same phase as they have major common interventions because they are most likely to have the same status as of the moment. On the other hand, some LGUs have unique sets of interventions based on their strengths.

The needed capacity includes having personnel with the competence to know what to do with their function, the ability to finance what needs to be done, the mandate to act on the assumed functions, and having the public support to do so. The limited structural and financial support, as well as the absence of policies in place and skilled human resource prevent the LGUs to carry out devolved functions.

3. The Indicative Capacity Development Priority provides the most important and urgent CapDev Interventions recommended to be implemented before 2024. All the capacity pillars which were the basis in the prioritization of interventions such as structure, competency, management systems, enabling policies and mechanisms, knowledge, learning and leadership are in equal footing in terms of ranking which interventions should come first, second, and last in implementing the full devolution of functions.

From the comprehensive analysis conducted in this research, thoughtful recommendations emerged as essential pathways to address the challenges identified, to wit:

1. Policy-making and standard setting shall emanate from the National Agencies during the First Phase of Devolution to prescribe the processes on how LGUs might develop a program of action to achieve prescribed conditions of the different service areas as a result of the devolution at the soonest possible time.
2. Ready technical assistance to LGUs should be made available in each phase of the devolution by the national agencies. Monitoring of LGU performance and compliance to national policies and standards and to how they conduct the prescribed methods and procedures for governing

environmental amenities and natural resources may be prioritized by the national agencies. Organizational development in the different service areas may be prioritized.

3. The Indicative Capacity Development Priorities are offered to the Provincial Government of this study's locale to guide their prioritization of the interventions. The above CapDev Prioritization could help the government identify which interventions are urgent. The results and analysis are also offered to the Department of the Interior and Local Government as baseline for their planned intervention in guiding the LGUs in implementing the devolution transition plans.

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