

IRM POST-CONFERENCE *Policy Brief*

INTRODUCTION

The triumvirate approaches of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and ecosystems management and restoration (DRR-CCA-EMR), collectively known as the Integrated Risk Management (IRM), have required local government units (LGUs) to be at the forefront of the planning process. While LGUs have embraced these big tasks, their ability to undertake such has been limited by their inadequate capacities and confusion in the use of various planning frameworks and approaches. To address the inadequacy and confusion, the Partners for Resilience (PFR)—represented by the Assistance and Cooperation for Community Resilience and Development (ACCORD) and CARE Philippines—and the Center for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG) of the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) have collaborated in organizing and conducting the IRM Conference.

The conference was an attempt to harmonize planning frameworks and guidelines espoused by different capacity builders. It was designed to re-orient the participants on the various frameworks from the government and civil society organizations, and point out differences and similarities in planning processes across types of local plans.

CONFERENCE METHODOLOGY

The conference adopted three major activities—panel presentation, workshop, and open forum. The panel presentations revisited the different planning frameworks—Center for Disaster and Preparedness' *community-based DRR and CCA in development planning*, Aksiyon Klima's *12 steps in mainstreaming DRR and CCA in development planning*, PFR's *Integrated Risk Management*, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board's *integration of DRR and CCA in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP)*, and Department

of the Interior and Local Government's *Rationalized Planning System*.

The workshops were avenues for discussing differences and similarities in the processes across various types of plans (CLUP, CDP, LCCAP, and DRRM Plans), identifying varied approaches in the steps in the planning process, and determining capacity and data needs of LGUs in planning; while the open forum threshed out issues, clarifications and further details.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LGUs recognize the importance of **collaboration of actors** and sectors in preparing their local plans. As collaboration is seen as important at the local level, standard setters at the national level may also want to consider a mechanism by which **planning experts from different sectors sit together and discuss local planning standards and guidelines setting**.
2. There are **common practices and steps** across different types of plans which can be **harmonized and synchronized**.
3. There are too many plans required of LGUs. There may be a need to **focus on core plans or those that are highly relevant to the context of each LGU**.
4. While some LGUs recognize the importance of local data in local planning, many remain to be **highly dependent on national government agencies** for their data needs. **Open data for better access** by LGUs is important while the dependence is still observed.
5. Reducing dependence of LGUs on NGAs in terms of the former's data needs will require **continuous capacity building**. **Partnership with NGAs, NGOs and the academe** for this purpose remains relevant.

DISCUSSIONS

Collaborative engagement at the local government level is an important mechanism in the local planning process. This collaboration is evident in the creation of multi-sectoral Technical Working Group (TWG) which is at the forefront when it comes to the preparation of the various local plans.

Experiences of LGUs in the preparation of local plans (Comprehensive Development Plan, Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Local Climate Change Action Plan, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan) indicate that there are **common steps** undertaken across the various local plans mentioned beforehand. However, these steps **happen at different stages** in the planning processes and are called differently from one type of plan to another (for example, DRR planning calls one step as “Vulnerability and Risk Assessment” while CLU planning calls it “Comprehensive Risk Assessment.”).

Because of the **unsynchronized planning steps**, LGUs’ efficiency is reduced. Their efforts are unnecessarily doubled in the sense that they conduct risk assessment for LCCAP at one point, and another risk assessment for DRR at a later time. Such waste of time adds to the fact that LGUs are required to prepare **at least 33 local plans** (see list) per the report of DILG. Some LGUs lament that their capacity to do all plans is not enough.

Another challenge faced by LGUs in the preparation of local plans is the **unavailability of data**. There is recognition that data should come from the LGUs and their local communities, but their **capacity to produce or source such data needs is also insufficient**. Thus, LGUs rely much on national government agencies for data that include weather information, climate projections, geologic information, among others. Use of assessment tools and technologies also needs guidance from national government agencies and relevant non-government organizations within the sector.. Another recommendation which came out during the open discussions is for LGUs to link with their respective local universities, researchers and scientists who can help in the discovery of information

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List of NGA-Mandated Plans

1. Action Plan for the Protection of Children
2. Aquatic and Fisheries Management Plan
3. Annual Culture and the Arts Plan
4. Anti-Poverty Reduction Plan
5. Local Coconut Development Plan
6. Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
7. Food Security Plan
8. Forest Management Plan
9. Gender and Development Plan
10. Integrated Area Community Public Safety Plan
11. Local Entrepreneurship Development Plan
12. Sustainable Area Development Plan
13. Local Tourism Plan
14. Small and Medium Enterprise Development Plan
15. SAFDZ Plan
16. Solid Waste Management Plan
17. Watershed Management Plan
18. ADSDPP
19. Plan for PWDs
20. Forest Land Use Plan
21. Local Climate Change Action Plan
22. Peace and Order Public Safety Plan
23. Nutrition Action Plan
24. ICT Plan
25. Local Shelter Plan
26. Plan for the Elderly
27. Plan for Health and Family Planning
28. Coastal Management Plan
29. Information Strategic and Management Plan
30. People’s Plan
31. Business Strategy/Plan
32. Capacity Development / HRMD Plan
33. Transportation Management Plan

Source: DILG

CONCLUSION

In its current state, local planning in the Philippines (at least in the areas of DRR, CCA and EMR) remains unsynchronized, but the presence of common practices in the preparation of different local plans indicates that local planning is ‘harmonizable.’ Synchronizing the steps across different plans improves the efficiency of LGUs in terms of planning. Availability of local data along with improving LGU capacity to find or produce these data also aids in the local planning process. While such capacity is not yet fully in place, LGUs should continue partnership with other actors such as NGAs, NGOs and local universities.