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Bottom-up budgeting process assessment: Zamboanga del Norte

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Philippine Institute for Development Studies
Surian sa mga Pag-aaral Pangkaunlaran ng Pilipinas

Bottom-Up Budgeting Process Assessment: Zamboanga del Norte

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and Keith C. Detros*

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BOTTOM-UP BUDGETING PROCESS ASSESSMENT: ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE

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Philippine Institute for Development Studies
July 2015

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Objectives of the Study	4
Methodology.....	4
Scope and Limitation of Study.....	5
SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE.....	6
Land and People	6
* No data for 3 barangays	7
Financial Profile	8
Priority Needs and Development Goals	9
Civil Society Organizations	11
ASSESSMENT OF THE BOTTOM-UP BUDGETING PROCESS.....	15
2015 BUB Planning Cycle.....	15
Adoption of Enhanced Process and the KC Community Empowerment Activity Cycle (Case of Mutia)	19
Backgrounder	19
KC Social Preparation Process and FY 2016 BUB Planning cycle	20
CSO Assembly	21
CSO Invitation	21
CSO Attendance	23
Selection of CSO representatives in the LPRAT.....	27
Poverty Situation Analysis and Issue Identification	29
Extent of CSO Participation in the Assembly.....	31
LPRAT Orientation	32
LPRAP Workshop	32
Composition of the LPRAT and EMDC.....	32
Invitation and attendance.....	34
Project Identification and Prioritization	35
Quality of Participation	39
LPRAP Projects Finalized during LPRAP Workshop	41
Finalization of Local Poverty Reduction Action Plan	42
Quality of Projects in the LPRAP.....	44
Sub-Project Implementation and Monitoring	47
Status of implementation of FY2014 Projects.....	48
Status of implementation of FY2015 Projects.....	50

NGA Feedback and Information Sharing	50
Project Monitoring	52
GENERAL ASSESSMENT	53
Usefulness of the BUB	53
Joint Memorandum Circular No. 5	54
Facilitation: Community Mobilizers, NAPC Focal Person and BUB Secretariat	57
Political Interference	59
Increasing Coverage and Participation	61
Adoption of the Enhanced Process	63

Abstract

Bottom up Budgeting is a mechanism implemented to institutionalize and incentivize grassroots participation, as represented by Civil Society Organizations, in the planning and budgeting of their respective cities or municipalities. This paper assess how the various participatory steps were conducted and how the selected sub-projects from the previous budgeting round was being implemented. Specifically, this paper focuses on 3 LGUs from Zamboanga del Norte, with various levels of development and participation in government programs. The assessment was conducted by observing the BUB activities of the study sites, conducting interviews and focus group discussions, and validating findings against secondary data. Findings on the general usefulness of the BUB, its current guidelines, and interaction with corollary government programs were highlighted, along with recommendations.

Keywords:

Philippines, Zamboanga del Norte, bottom-up budgeting, poverty reduction, local governance, participatory budgeting, civil society organizations, grassroots

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Introduction

The Aquino administration through the Human Development and Poverty Reduction Cluster (HDPRC) and Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Cluster (GGACC) launched the Bottom up Budgeting (BUB) exercise in 2012. The strategy hopes to empower civil society organizations and citizens' groups to engage local government and national government agencies and make them more responsive to people's needs. The Empowerment of the Poor Program (EPP) developed by the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) in cooperation with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) complemented the BUB initiative by strengthening civil society organizations' (CSO) capacity to engage with the local government units (LGUs). For the 2012 planning exercise, EPP built on the approaches and lessons from various community-driven development processes such as the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Mindanao Rural Development Program (MRDP).

Since the FY 2015 round, the coverage of the BUB have already been expanded to include all the municipalities/cities across the country. The 2015 BUB planning cycle, which started in October 2015, is guided by the Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 5. It sets separate guidelines for municipalities in KALAHI-CIDSS (KC) cities and municipalities, from those which are not. For non-KC areas, the main components in the grassroots budgeting planning cycle are as follows:

- a. *Preparation of poverty reduction planning and budgeting.* NAPC and DILG to organize social preparation activities for CSOs and LGUs on participatory planning and budgeting. Activities include Regional Poverty Reduction Action Teams (RPRATs) orientation, CSO assembly, selection of Local Poverty Reduction Action Teams (LPRATs) consisting of both LGU and CSOs, LPRATs orientation, and updating of and validation of socio-economic data which informs the Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs).
- b. *Conduct of LPRAP workshop and priority project identification.* LPRAP workshops are to be conducted with active participation of CSOs to formulate LPRAPs and to identify priority poverty reduction projects with budget based on relevant socio-economic data.

- c. *Endorsement of CSOs* on the list of priority projects and budget as proof of genuine participation.
- d. *Approval by the Sanggunian* before the list is given to national government.
- e. *Submission of list of priority projects.* LPRATs to submit the list, endorsed by the CSOs and approved by the Sanggunian, to the RPRATs through DILG Regional Offices (ROs).
- f. *Consolidation of the list of priority projects by Region.* DILG ROs will consolidate the lists and send the consolidated lists to RPRATs and NAPC.
- g. *Validation and review of priority projects by RPRAT.* RPRATs will review and validate the proposed projects. Once approved, RPRATs will submit the list of validated projects to NAPC and the Regional Development Council (RDC). NAPC will then consolidate all the submissions of RPRATs and present it to the BUB oversight agencies for approval.
- h. *Integration of LGU projects* in the budgets of participating agencies and submission to DBM.
- i. *Provision of counterpart funds.* LGUs will provide counterpart funds as stipulated in the JMC.
- j. *Project implementation.* LGUs that meet the requirements stipulated in the JMC, such as being the recipient of DILG's seal of good housekeeping and implementation of Public Financial Management Improvement Plan as determined by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), will implement the priority projects.

Additionally, Guidelines for FY2015 budget preparation aim to integrate the barangay level bottom-up budgeting under KALAHI-CIDSS (KC) program and the BUB process. Municipalities that have graduated from or are currently implementing KC will follow the Enhanced Grassroots Budgeting Process. Under this process, following additional steps have been added:

- k. *Integration of Participatory Barangay Development Planning:* Prior to the conduct of CSO assemblies at the municipal level, DSWD, with support from DILG, will facilitate the participatory barangay development planning in all barangays in KC municipalities.
- l. *Integration of the LPRAT into the Enhanced Local Development Council (LDC):* The Enhanced LDC, which comprises vice-chairpersons of all Barangay Development Councils, congress person or representative, Punong Barangays, community volunteer representatives from each barangay, chairperson of the appropriations committee, and CSOs, will form an LPRAT which will serve as its technical working group.

JMC No. 5-2014 issued in October 2014 defines the policies and procedures for FY 2016 planning cycle. Changes from the JMC No. 4 include the following:

- a. The removal of the Department of Agrarian Reform from the list of participating agencies;
- b. Inclusion of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (as part of Department of Agriculture), National Irrigation Authority and the National Commission on Indigenous People;
- c. Announcement and invitation two weeks before the assembly and workshop;
- d. The public posting for CSO assembly should include not only the list of CSOs invited but information about the person/office who may be contacted by other local CSOs who wish to be invited;
- e. Not only requires the C/MPDO to present the poverty situation of the city/municipality for validation of the LPRAT (as per JMC 4), but also stresses that updated data/information should be made accessible to the LPRAT for validation and discussion;
- f. Projects in the LPRAP should be 100% within the menu;
- g. Projects must consider gender-responsiveness and gender equality in their design and implementation;
- h. Removal of the multi-year planning approach;
- i. Grassroots Budgeting Calendar (as provided in the JMC) is originally set to start a month earlier than the previous year

Additionally, JMC No. 6 was released in February 2015 to define the guidelines on project implementation and monitoring. Not only does it outlines guidelines on fund releases, project implementation (i.e. coordination between NGAs and LGUs, realignment of funds, and mode of implementation), and provision of LGU counterpart, it also provides guidelines on project monitoring. Monitoring mechanisms provided in the JMC include: 1. reporting by LGUs through quarterly LPRAP meetings and submission of quarterly progress reports; 2. reporting by NGA regional office through quarterly submission of progress reports through online reporting system established by the DBM, which should be validated by agency central offices; 3. Quarterly meeting of RPRAT to review submission of LGU reports and status of project implementation; 4. A citizen-led monitoring of projects to be undertaken by NAPC through local CSO partners. Funding support for the monitoring and evaluation of BUB projects have also been provided to participating agencies in the GAA of FY2014 and FY2015.

Objectives of the Study

The study focuses on measuring and analyzing the extent of “representation” and “voices” of the target group, i.e. poor households, through CSOs and basic sector groups in the decision-making process in FY2016 round and sub-project implementation of BUB for FY2014 and 2015 rounds. It aims at examining how the LPRAP planning process and prioritization of the projects are being implemented on the ground and explore areas for further improvement for the subsequent rounds. Findings of this process evaluation will result in a set of practical recommendations on possible adjustments in the BUB JMC guidelines.

Methodology

The project utilized observation of BUB-related activities, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with various stakeholders in twelve municipalities in four provinces. To get a panel data, 2 municipalities in Agusan del Norte and Camarines Sur which were surveyed for FY2013, FY2014 and FY 2015 process assessments were automatically included. In addition to this, the other municipalities were selected according to the following criteria:

- a. Variation in the geographical context – urban vs. rural; and
- b. Variation in the presence of KALAHI-CIDSS- NCDDP program – enhanced vs. standard BUB process

This paper covers the assessment of the process in the three municipalities in Zamboanga del Norte, namely Dapitan City, Polanco and Mutia. Key Informant Interviews conducted were as follows:

- a. Local Chief Executive
- b. MLGOO (LGOO and City Director in the case of Butuan City)
- c. City Planning and Development Office (CPDO)
- d. City Treasurer, City Budget Officer, and Sectoral heads
- e. Sanggunian Chair of Appropriations Committee
- f. Head of Confederation of Barangay Chairmen
- g. Community mobilizer
- h. Regional DILG focal person

- i. Area Coordinator of the KC-NCDDP
- j. CSO co-chair of LPRAT, 2015 round
- k. CSO leader not involved in CSO assembly
- l. CSO leader not involved in LPRAT

Focus group discussions were conducted for the following groups:

- a. CSOs involved in CSO Assembly (in the case of the KC municipality, distinction was made between BDC vice-chairs and POs)
- b. CSOs not involved in CSO Assembly
- c. Barangay Captain with and without BUB Projects

Furthermore, secondary data gathered from the LGU and the DILG regional office were presented to provide a background on the analyses.

Scope and Limitation of Study

Dapitan City was selected as the urban study site being one of the two cities in the province. Polanco (non-KC) and Mutia (KC) were selected with consideration to their location from and population densities similar with Dapitan City. Analyses in all three municipalities were limited to the information gathered from the focus group discussions and key information interviews, as well as the analyses of several documents provided by various stakeholders and the observation of BUB-related events in the study sites. During the observation period, the research team did not attempt to integrate itself in group discussions. This is mainly to prevent further observer effect. Therefore, specific interaction within groups were not captured in the observation, but merely inferred and then validated during interviews.

The evaluation does not include social mapping of CSOs and participant observations in the selected sites before the start of the process assessment. Identification of CSO representatives to be included in KIIs and FGDs was done by the team using the information gathered from the CMs, MLGOOs, LGU officials and other CSO representatives. Invitations, specifically in Mutia and Polanco, were coursed through the MPDO and MLGOO, respectively. KIIs and FGDs with the CSOs in Dapitan City and Mutia were conducted in a neutral area for the team to be able to elicit raw and unfiltered responses from the respondents. In the case of Polanco, due to lack of rentable venue in the municipality, KIIs and FGDs were conducted at the DILG building.

Socio-economic Profile

Land and People

Zamboanga del Norte is a province in Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula) in Mindanao. It is bounded by Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay on the south, Misamis Occidental on the east, and Sulu sea on the northwest. The province occupies a total land area of 730,100 hectares, making Zamboanga del Norte the largest province in the region. 90% is considered production land, 8.10% is protection land and 1.89% is considered built-up areas.

In 2010, population of Zamboanga del Norte reached 957,997 while population density equal is 130/sq km. This makes the province ranked 24th in terms of population and 60th in terms of population density in the country.

Zamboanga del Norte is comprised of 25 municipalities and 2 cities. It is clustered into 3 congressional districts. Provincial capital is Dipolog City. Dapitan City is a third income class city located on the northern part of the Zamboanga Peninsula and is part of the first congressional district. It is bounded by the Sulu Sea on the North, municipalities of Mutia and La Libertad on the south, Sibutad and Rizal on the east, and Dipolog City, Municipalities of Polanco, Sibutad, La Libertad and Rizal, all in the province of Zamboanga del Norte.

Among the 25 municipalities of Zamboanga del Norte is Polanco, a third class municipality in the northeastern part of Zamboanga del Norte, also part of the first congressional district. To its west and northwest is Dipolog City, to its northeast is Dapitan City, to its east is the municipality of Pinan, and it shares its southern border with the municipality of Sergio Osmena.

Also part of Zamboanga del Norte is Mutia, fifth class municipality in the province of Zamboanga del Norte located 29 kilometers from the provincial capital of Dipolog City. It the second smallest municipality in Zamboanga del Norte, bordered on the north by the municipalities of La Libertad and Piñan; on the south by the municipality of Sergio Osmena Sr.; and on the east by the province of Misamis Occidental.

Figure 1. Maps of Study Sites



Additional information of the study sites are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1. LGU Profiles

	Dapitan City	Polanco	Mutia
Rounds of BUB	3	3	3
Geographical context	Urban	Rural	Rural
KC area	No	No	Yes
BUB process adopted	Regular	Regular	Enhanced
Income Classification	Third class	Third class	Fifth class
Land area (ha)	39,053.00	22,532.91	7,358.00
Production Land	77%	75%	51%
Protection Land	18%	9%	25%
Build-up Areas	5%	16%	23%
Number of Barangays	50	30	16
	<i>Rural</i>	42	28
	<i>Urban</i>	8	2
	<i>Poor</i>	33	16
	<i>Non-poor</i>	17	11*
Distance from regional center	290 km	79.07 km	98 km
Population	77,441	37,472	11,975
Population density (persons/sq km)	198	191	163
Status of SGH	Passed	Passed	Passed
Main source of income	Agriculture and fishery	agriculture	Agriculture
Poverty incidence	88%	37%	75.69%

* No data for 3 barangays

Financial Profile

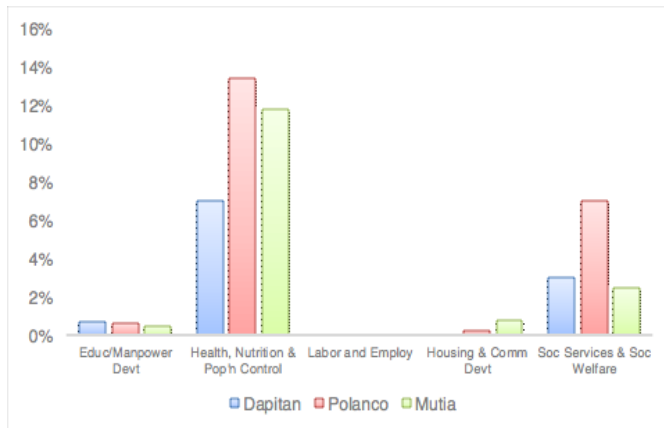
In terms of income classification, Dapitan City and Polanco are third class LGUs while Mutia lags as a fifth class municipality. **Table 2** illustrates revenues of the three municipalities from local sources, IRA and other sources in 2012. Total revenues of Dapitan, Polanco and Mutia in 2013 amount to PhP413.86M, PhP78.17M, and PhP37.75M, respectively, all demonstrating an increase from the previous year for various reasons. For Dapitan, despite a negative growth in non-tax revenues, revenues from tax grew significantly at 55.98% in 2013. Further, improvements in all external sources can be observed. In the case of Polanco, non-tax revenues significantly increased by 96.09%. Revenues generated from tax and IRA also increased modestly. Finally, in the case of Mutia, despite a decline in all local sources, revenues from external sources increased resulting in positive revenue growth in from 2012 to 2013.

Table 2. Sources of Revenue

	Dapitan		Polanco		Mutia	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Tax revenues	10.3	16.1	3.3	3.3	0.6	0.6
Non-tax revenues	21.1	18.3	1.9	3.8	0.9	0.7
IRA	345.0	369.1	63.8	71.0	33.0	36.4
Other sources	0.3	10.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
TOTAL	376.7	413.9	69.1	78.2	34.6	37.7

The three municipalities can be characterized as having poor dependence on locally sourced income and other shares from national tax collection, and very high dependence on IRA. Dependence on locally sourced income of Dapitan, Polanco and Mutia amount to 8.3%, 9.1% and 3.5%, respectively, all lower than the 30-40% city average. Shares from national tax collection, on the other hand, amount to 0.09%, 0.07% and 0.14%, respectively, again all lower than the 10%-15% city average. IRA dependence amount to 89.2%, 90.8% and 96.4%, all higher than the 60-70% average city IRA dependency. While Dapitan and Polanco has been slight less depended on IRA in 2013 compared with 2012, IRA dependence of Mutia slighted increased in the same year.

Figure 3. Shares of Expenditures on Social Services to Total Expenditure



Source: SRE, 2012

Total operating expenditures of Dapitan, Mutia and Polanco amount to 321.70M, 66.36M, and 32.63M in 2013. Spending in all three municipalities are higher than the previous year. 66-68% of the expenses go to general public services while 10-20% go to economic services. Only around 10% of total expenditures of Dapitan, 21% in Polanco and around 15% in Mutia go to social services. Shares of various social services to total expenditure are provided in **Figure 3**. Expenditures on health, nutrition and population control account for a large share of total expenditure in all

three municipalities. This is followed by other social services and social welfare, and education and manpower development. Labor and employment have not been allocated budget in all three municipalities. This has been the case at least in the last 4 years. Further, Dapitan have not allotted funding for housing and community development in the last 4 years.

Priority Needs and Development Goals

The current administration of Dapitan aims to make the city a globally competitive heritage center and eco-tourism destination in Southern Philippines, in an environmentally friendly setting. Considering tourism as its biggest potential contributor to growth, the city aims to increase both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals. In addition to boosting the city’s tourism sector, the city aims to maximize productivity in agriculture, livestock and fishery, and engage in other trade, commercial and industrial activities, to participate and contribute to the Dapitan-Dipolog-Polanco-Katipunan-Roxas-Manukan (DDPKaRoMa) Industrial Corridor. Public and private sector linkages is aimed to be strengthened, while adequate infrastructure is aimed to be put into place to support sustainable economic development. In terms of the provision of social services, the current administration aims to improve delivery and basic services and focus on improving health structures and day care facilities. Further, educational systems are aimed to be promoted and preserved.

For the administration of Polanco from 2013 to 2016, the main vision is to be a “poverty-free municipality by year 2030” (ELA-Polanco). With this objective, certain development goals were laid out along four outcome areas in Polanco’s Executive Legislative Agenda. First is on being a Competitive and Business Friendly LGU. The second area is on being an Environment-Protective, Climate Change-Adaptive, and Disaster Resilient LGU. Third, Polanco also aims to be

a Socially Effective and Safe LGU. And lastly, the fourth area is on creating an Accountable, Transparent, Participative, and Effective Local Governance.

Mutia's development is infrastructure-driven. Analyzing the current administration's ELA, the leadership believes that overall progress in the municipality can be achieved by implementing major infrastructure projects. The economic, commercial, industrial and social development goals include: public market, integrated bus terminal, a corn mill, concreting of core local roads, and agricultural centers. The Municipal Mayor has highlighted this as the main thrust of his governance, although livelihood programs are still part of his regular programs. He concedes however that the IRA is not enough to fulfill the municipality's infrastructure needs, thus financial assistance such as the BUB is a welcome development as it has enabled them to start pursuing their development goals, especially the concreting of roads.

Common needs of LGUs as identified by key informants from the CSO, municipal/city government, and barangay government are presented in **Table 3**. Needs from the CSO and LGU side show similarities. Identified needs of LGU are not limited to infrastructure projects. Similarly, CSO representatives also acknowledge the need for other non-livelihood projects. Notably, although livelihood has been mentioned by barangay captains as a pressing need in their locality, most of the projects identified are infrastructure projects. Rarely is the provision of services being mentioned by barangay captains. Further, needs expressed by the city/municipal government units are more diverse and more comprehensive than both CSOs and barangay captains.

Table 3. Priority Needs

	Dapitan City (Urban)			Polanco (Rural, non-KC)			Mutia (Rural, KC)		
	CSO	LGU	Brgy Chair	CSO	LGU	Brgy Chair	CSO	LGU	Brgy Chair
Disaster relocation areas									
Livelihood and employment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support to agriculture	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Healthcare /health facilities	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	
Education services		✓		✓			✓		
Agro-forestry productivity									
Disaster risk reduction management and climate change adaptation measures				✓	✓				
Road Networks (FMR/ brgy access roads)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Poverty				✓	✓		✓		
Water systems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Solid Waste Disposal				✓					
Public market		✓						✓	
bus terminal	✓	✓						✓	
public cemetery		✓							
vehicle		✓							
construction of building		✓							
Construction of Gymnasium								✓	
Day-care centers							✓		

Civil Society Organizations

The role of CSO participation in local governance has already been recognized. The level of participation, however, varies across LGUs. **Figure 4** provides the rating of the three municipalities and the province in terms of engaging citizens and CSOs in local governance in 2009 and 2012. This is measured through the

CSO participation in the Local Special Bodies, CSO involvement in local development projects, and Citizens Feedback. LGUs are rated on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 denoting excellent performance while scales 1 to 4 indicates areas of improvements. Generally, there had been improvements in CSO participation in the province from 2009 to 2012. More specifically, Mutia fared better than the other two municipalities and the province as a whole in 2012. Of the three municipalities under study, only Mutia

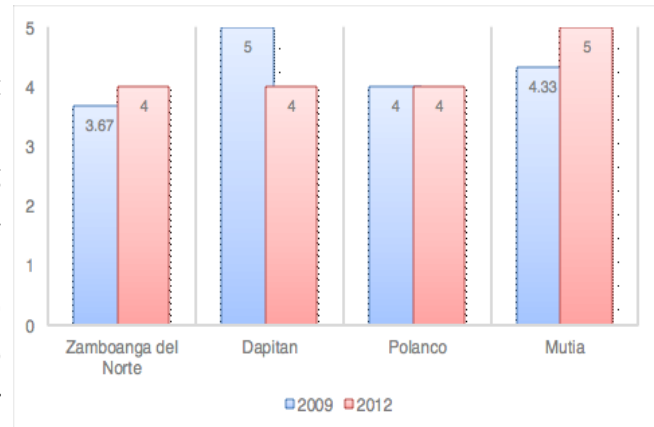


Figure 4. CSO Participation, SLGPR

showed improvements in CSO participation from 2009 to 2012. Dapitan City, which had very high ratings in CSO participation from 2009-2011 deteriorated and performed only at par with the province in 2012. Polanco, which also performed at par with the province, did not show improvements since 2009.

With the acknowledged role of CSOs in community affairs, increasing interest on participatory planning has been observed. Usual practice involves the participation of only the LGU-accredited CSOs in LGU affairs. More distinct illustration is the membership of accredited CSOs in Local Development Council and Local Special Bodies as stipulated in the Local Government Code of the Philippines (section 107). Further to this, previous BUB cycles have focused on the invitation of LGU accredited CSOs.

However, increased awareness on the role of other non-accredited but recognized CSOs can already be perceived. One of the new features of the FY2017 BUB planning cycle in Zamboanga del Norte is the conduct of CSO mapping led by the community mobilizer (CM), previously called the local facilitator. The CSO map was not only composed of LGU-accredited CSOs but also included other CSOs registered with any of the government agencies, other non-accredited but LGU-recognized organizations, Pantawid Parent Leaders and SKAs (SEA-K Associations).

CSOs mapping in all three municipalities started in June 2015, where the community mobilizer validated and expanded the list of CSOs obtained from various sources which include the LGOO, C/MPDC, office of the mayor, sector heads and line agencies. The CM prioritized organizations

with legal entities but also included other non-registered organizations that are recognized in the locality. This list of CSOs is validated by the CM through site visits. The three CMs in Zamboanga del Norte internally targeted to map 50 CSOs per municipality prior to the conduct of CSO assembly. This list served as basis for invitation in the assembly. According to the CMs and regional DILG, mapping is continuously being done even after the FY2015 planning cycle guaranteeing the greater CSO coverage in the following rounds of the BUB.

Before the conduct of the CSO assembly, the CM, which is the same in all three municipalities under study, was able to map 75 organizations in Dapitan City, 63 in Polanco, and 42 in Mutia. Numbers of organizations mapped in all three municipalities are all much greater than the number of accredited CSOs in each locality. Specifically, only 42 CSOs are accredited in Dapitan, 21 in Polanco and 5 in Mutia. However, notably, not all LGU-accredited organizations are included in the map in Dapitan and Polanco. Specifically, only 4 (9.5%) of the CSOs accredited by the City of Dapitan are included in the map. Number of LGU-accredited CSOs in Polanco that are included in the map are higher at 16 (76%). This may imply different things: one, either the CM has not fully exhausted existing CSO lists in doing the CSO mapping, or two, LGU-accredited CSOs are no longer active and/or functional. While this has not been explored in this assessment, this should be looked into and should be responded upon by either updating/refreshing the list of LGU-accredited CSOs or expanding and intensifying the mapping of CSOs in the locality.

CSO maps constructed by the CM provide proof of active community organizing at the local level. However, despite this, not all have acknowledged the importance of accreditation with the LGU. Rather, most are either (1) registered with line agencies which provide them support, or (2) recognized at the barangay level. According to the respondents in Dapitan, CSOs are not fully informed not only of the accreditation process but also of the benefits they can take advantage of once they become accredited. Similarly, some of the respondents in Polanco hold that the process itself is not clearly defined, even for some of the LGU officials. From the perception of CSOs in Mutia, there is a lack of understanding on the benefits of having the organization accredited, nor are they familiar with the process of accreditation.

For those aware of the process, the long list of requirements serves as a hindrance for accreditation to some. In addition, the limited time allowed for LGU-accreditation, that is, 90 days after the LCE has been elected, seem to be restrictive. On the other hand, some officials hold that the accreditation process is easy to undergo and that, even with the 90-day window period for application, accreditation is actually a continuing process.

In addition to the process of accreditation, political alliance and existing CSO-LGU relationship discourage some organizations to register with the LGU and participate in LGU affairs. This is most specially the case in Dapitan. Some of the CSO representatives argue that CSOs play a very

minimal role in LGU affairs despite having a seat in the LDC. According to them, projects are already determined by the LGU and there is no way they can have any influence on what is to be included in the Annual Investment Plan. Some respondents claim that some CSOs are weeded out and/or some CSOs are hand-picked to participate in LGU affairs. The LGU, however, maintains that they encourage CSO participation but accepts the fact that some CSOs are just nuisance, thus, their participation needs to be controlled. Similarly, although less severe, it is widely acknowledged as common practice in Polanco that organizations invited are affiliated with the incumbent LCE, and that they are mainly relegated to approve the plans promoted by the LGU. Political alliance, however, is less of a problem in Mutia. The local government of Mutia states that the CSOs are active in the municipality. However, there are only 5 that have sought accreditation with the LGU. These accredited CSOs are automatically part of the Municipal Development Council. The influence of the CSOs in decision-making is limited in this regard, as it is limited to the voting process. The stakeholders stated that although CSOs can speak freely during the MDC, they rarely propose projects.

Table 4 provides the CSO composition in the three municipalities based on the CSO map created by the CM. Dapitan is dominated by farmers and fisherfolks organizations, which is the main occupation in the city. This is followed by SEA-K representatives, Pantawid Parent Leaders, women's and faith-based organizations. Polanco is dominated by farmers organizations, also the main occupation in the municipality. Other dominating organizations include government employees associations, and cooperatives. In Mutia, the KC municipality, CSO map include past BSPMC members of the 2nd cycle's KC process, which compose 40% of the CSO map. This is followed by cooperatives, SEA-K representatives and Pantawid Parent leaders. Note that there is only 1 representative from the farmers sector, despite Mutia being heavily dependent on agriculture.

If we were to compare the CSO map with a list merging the CSOs mapped by CM and LGU-accredited¹, it can be noted that sectoral composition changes, except in the case of Mutia where all 5 accredited CSOs were part of the CSO map. For example, cooperatives in Dapitan City only account to 3% of the CSO map but account to 12% the merged list. Similarly, in the case of Polanco, women's organizations only account to 2% of the CSO map but account to 6% of the merged list. These examples illustrate that dominant sectors in the CSO map is not the typical organizations who seek accreditation with the LGU. Further, and probably more worrisome, is the type of organizations prioritized in the construction of CSO map. Some sectors, which might be dominant in the locality in reality, might be disregarded or not prioritized in the construction of CSO map, leading to lesser representation in the BUB. By

¹ This is so we do not double count accredited CSOs that are part of the map

ensuring the same sectors dominating all CSO list, i.e. CSO map, LGU-accredited, and other organizations with legal entity, it can be assured that CSOs who will participate in the BUB and other LGU affairs are true representation of the grassroots.

Table 4. CSO Profiles

sectors	Dapitan				Polanco				Mutia			
	CSO map + Accredited	CSO map	CSO Assembly	LPRAT Member	CSO map + Accredited	CSO map	CSO Assembly	LPRAT Member	CSO map + Accredited	CSO map	CSO Assembly	LPRAT Member
Farmers	23	23	9	3	37	36	30	3	1	1	1	1
Fisherfolks	16	14	6	2								
Cooperatives	13	2			6	6	3	1	4	4	4	
PWDs	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1				
Women	8	5	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Senior citizen	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Faith-based	5	5	2		2	2	1	1	2	2	2	
Youth	1				2	2	2	1				
Professional									3	3	1	1
Business sector	2	1	1	1								
4Ps	5	5	7	2	1	1	2	1	8	8	8	
SEAK	7	7	4						4	4	4	
govt employees assoc	4	2	1		7	7	4	2				
IP									1	1	1	1
Other POs	23	8	5		7	6	5		4	4	4	1
BDC Vice Chair									13	13	13	5
Total	111	75	39	11	68	63	50	12	42	42	39	10

Another limitation that can be cited on the CSO map is how the mapping was conducted. For the conduct of the mapping, the CM had to survey all the barangays in their assigned areas to identify active CSOs. However, based on the conversations with the CMs, they do not have a separate mobilization fund to carry out the task. In order to reach all barangays, the expenses would come from their own salary. This, in effect, is a disincentive for the CMs to diligently map the CSOs in the municipality. This is not to mention that a CM handles more than one municipality, and an even greater number of barangays. More often than not, the CMs are inclined to achieve a certain quota – at least 50 CSOs per municipality in the case of Zambaonga del Norte– rather than fully sweep the barangays for active CSOs. In coordination with the ACT also, in the case of Mutia, the CM can request for past BSPMC leaders and include them as active CSOs.

Further, it is worth mentioning that mapping was done within two months prior the conduct of the CSO assembly. The CMs and Regional DILG assured that the mapping is a continuous process and that, in the subsequent BUB cycle, greater CSO coverage can be expected. However, it may be possible that in the FY2016 cycle, other active CSOs may have not been invited. Despite these, it can be said that the CSO map is a great improvement from the previous CSO lists. And that, using the map in events other than the BUB can ensure greater representation of the CSOs.

Assessment of the Bottom-up Budgeting Process

2015 BUB Planning Cycle

The LGUs covered in this assessment have been part of the BUB since the FY2014 planning cycle. BUB budget in all three LGUs are provided in **Table 5**. While the budget from the NGAs remains constant at PhP22M in Dapitan City since the first round, there has been a significant increase in the LGU-counterpart, from PhP3.56M in 2014 to PhP8.8M in the subsequent rounds. The increase in LGU counterpart may be attributed to greater clarity in the guidelines and greater understanding on the side of the LGU. Of the total budget requested from the NGAs, a huge percentage was consistently allotted to road concreting in all the three rounds. Similarly, livelihood projects were consistently being identified in all three rounds. Agro-forestry/tourism projects, which were given focus in 2014, was no longer considered in the subsequent round. This may probably be due to problems encountered in implementing these projects. In terms of implementing agency, the DA, consistently is one of the main stakeholders involved, although value of which is declining. This is expected given agriculture is the primary industry in Dapitan City. Further, there has been a shift from DA-requested projects to DILG since 2015, primarily due to the removal of the farm to market roads from the DA and inclusion of road concreting under DILG. Finally, it can be observed that the 2016 LPRAP has greater variety in terms of type of project and implementing agency than in the two previous rounds.

In the case of Polanco, on the other hand, while NGA budget remains constant at PhP15M in the three rounds, LGU counterpart decreased from PhP2.55M in 2014, to PhP1.61M in 2015, to only PhP1.31M in 2016. LGU counterpart in 2014 was above the required LGU counterpart as per JMC. Although not explored during the interviews, possible reason would be the provision of additional funds by the municipality for the projects to push through. LGU counterpart during in 2015 and 2016, however, were near 10% of the total BUB funding, as required by the JMC. There is a decreasing trend in the number of projects, from 17 in 2014, to 16 in 2015 and only 10 in 2016. In terms of type of project, construction, health (through the construction of BHS and RHUs) and education (through construction of fences and purchasing of school facilities) are consistently being funded since the first round. Livelihood projects, although consistently being funded, can be observed to have been declining since the first round. In

terms of implementing agency, there has been a shift from DA-funded projects to DILG-funded projects.

Table 5. Comparison of the Three Rounds of the BUB²

	2014	2015	2016
Dapitan City			
No of projects (proposed)	12	12	15
Total budget	25,555,556	30,800,000	30,800,000
- NGA	22,000,000	22,000,000	22,000,000
- Counterpart	3,555,556	8,800,000	8,800,000
Type of project (% of total budget)			
- Livelihood	5%	18%	2%
- Road	41%	55%	
- Water systems	0%	5%	
- Construction	4%	0%	13%
- Equipment and facilities	12%	23%	8%
- Health	0%	0%	
- Agro-forestry	38%	0%	
- Education	0%	0%	10%
- Electrification			20%
- Data Construction	0%	0%	8%
Polanco			
No of projects (proposed)	17	16	10
Total budget	17,552,941	16,610,000	16,310,000
- NGA	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000
- Counterpart	2,552,941	1,610,000	1,310,000
Type of project (% of total budget)			
- Livelihood	23%	10%	7%
- Road	9%	0%	0%
- Water systems	0%	0%	28%
- Construction	49%	68%	42%
- Equipment and facilities	11%	19%	23%
- Health	8%	3%	0%
- Agro-forestry	0%	0%	0%
Mutia			
No of projects (proposed)	6	7	8
Total budget	16,315,789	15,100,000	15,725,000
- NGA	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000
- Counterpart	1,315,789	100,000	725,000
Type of project (% of total budget)			
- Livelihood	0%	4%	0%
- Road	73%	43%	80%
- Water systems	20%	46%	0%
- Construction	0%	0%	20%
- Equipment and facilities	0%	0%	0%
- Health	8%	0%	0%
- Agro-forestry	0%	4%	0%
- Capacity Building	0%	3%	0%

² as Proposed by the LPRAT and does not reflect across the board budget cut in 2015

In the case of Mutia, NGA budget is pegged at PhP15M except in the case of the 2015 LPRAP, while LGU counterpart decreased in 2015 and increased in 2016. As per follow-up with the MPDO, he argued that while there is a decrease in the LGU counterpart that are indicated in the LPRAP submitted to the region, these figures are only estimates and are primarily for compliance purposes only. In reality, the LGU has been depositing approximately 10% of the project cost as their counterpart. This practice is evident especially in FY 2015 where they just indicated 10% of the funds in two projects in order to be able to submit their proposal to DILG region.³ In terms of types of projects, all are infrastructure projects, 80% of which go to road construction/rehabilitation. Road construction has consistently been allocated funding since 2014, largest of which was during the 2016 BUB where 80% is allotted to road construction. Construction of water systems, which were given funding in 2014 and 2015 is no longer identified a priority in 2016. In terms of implementing agency, there seems to be a shift from DA and DAR in 2014 to DILG in 2015 and 2016. This is probably due to the removal of FMRs in the menu of programs of the DA, and the municipality's concentration on infra-related projects

Dapitan City and Polanco, being non-NCDDP areas, have been adopting the regular BUB process since the first round. Mutia started to adopt the enhanced process of the BUB only since the FY2015 cycle. However, according to the MPDC, the process became complicated since Mutia had null years for the implementation of KC from 2012 to 2014.

The 2016 regular BUB cycle started with the conduct of the CSO assembly, which was ideally set to be conducted in September 2014. In the case when the LGU is a KC municipality, the enhanced BUB process is adopted where process starts with the conduct of the KC Community Empowerment Activity Cycle prior to the CSO assembly. The CSO assembly in both the enhanced and regular BUB is followed by the conduct of the LPRAP workshop, where the LPRAT is tasked to formulate the LPRAP. This is where identification and prioritization of projects are done. In the case of the regular process, list of projects that are finalized in this workshop should then be submitted by the LGU to the RPRAT for consideration to be included in the budgets of the NGAs. If, however, the enhanced process was adopted, the enhanced LDC, composed of the LRPAT and barangay captains, is convened to approve the LPRAP prior the submission to the RPRAT. At the time of the interviews, final lists of priority projects have already been passed to the NPRAT for inclusion to the 2016 NEP. **Figure 5** provides the timeline of activities of the BUB 2016 planning cycles in the three sites under study.

³ This claim however, needs to be double-checked with DILG Regional Office if indeed the LGU had deposited funds more than what is indicated in the LPRAP.

Adoption of Enhanced Process and the KC Community Empowerment Activity Cycle (Case of Mutia)

Backgrounder

According to the MPDO, Mutia started to adopt the enhanced cycle during FY 2015. However, the process became complicated since Mutia had null years for the implementation of KC from 2012 to 2014. A discussion of the Enhanced Process in Mutia would not be clear enough without an understanding of the KC history in the municipality.

To lay the predicate, it is the third cycle KALAH-CIDSS program that the municipality is currently implementing. Initially, Mutia was not included in the list of beneficiary LGUs for KC implementation. According to the former ACT Coordinator, the earlier version of the program known as the KALAH-CIDSS: Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay (KC:KKB) generated savings from its 2003-2008 implementation. The savings allowed DSWD to identify additional local governments to adopt the KC process. Mutia was selected and thus started the KC process in February 17, 2010. The municipality went through the 1st and second cycle of the KC process. Until July 2012, Mutia's KC implementation was from the aforementioned savings. However, because Mutia was funded only through savings, there was as uncertainty in the availability of funds. The ACT coordinator and the staff had to be pulled out because there was no program to implement in the municipality and the KC process in Mutia had to be halted. The null years were from July 2012 to August 2014.

With the launch of the KALAH-CIDSS-National Community-Driven Development Program (KC:NCDDP), Mutia was identified as a beneficiary and now part of the regular funding. It was only in September 2014 that a new ACT coordinator was installed in Mutia, resuming the process, and considering it the 3rd cycle. This is the cycle that has coincided with the 2016 BUB implementation. At this rate, according to both the former and the current ACT coordinators, Mutia will graduate in 2017.

Although there has been no KC implementation during BUB FY 2015, the municipality still states that they have adopted the enhanced process. Per their understanding of the guidelines, they are required to undertake the enhanced process since they have been a recipient of the KC program. However, in lieu of the ACT spearheading the barangay assemblies, it is the Mayor, together with the MPDO that conducted consultations in all 16 barangays. These consultations occurred during the last quarter of 2013 until the first quarter of 2014. The local government stated that during the consultations, they have validated the PSA results of the most recent KC cycle, and considered the projects as suggested by barangays for the 2015 LPRAP projects. In totality, although the LGU claims they have been implementing the enhanced process since FY 2015, this is an improvisation of the procedures to comply and avail of the grant.

KC Social Preparation Process and FY 2016 BUB Planning cycle

The barangay assemblies for the KC: NCDDP process started during the month of October, and extending into November. As mandated, it was the Area Coordination Team of the DSWD which spearheaded the social preparation of the community development program. The same social preparation is needed for the Enhanced Process of the BUB. However, the timeline for the conduct of activities of the KALAHY-CIDSS-NDCCP and the BUB were not harmonized. In effect, the social preparations needed for the BUB process were not fully in place. This resulted into the issues evident in the entire BUB process in general.

The 1st Barangay Assembly (BA) is vital in laying down the foundations of the program. During the BA, the ACT give an orientation on the tenets of community-driven development, and the goals of the KALAHY-CIDSS-NCDDP program. It is also in the BA that the BUB process is introduced. The BA would also serve as a venue where community volunteers for the PSA workshop would be selected, as well as the selection of the BDC Vice-Chairperson. It is the BDC Vice-Chairperson who shall attend the CSO assembly, representing their respective barangays. However, only 9 out of the 16 barangays have conducted their BAs by the time the CSO assembly was conducted. This means that 7 barangays have not selected their BDC Vice-Chairpersons when the CSO assembly was done.

Further, out of the 16 barangays, only 7 had conducted the PSA workshops and none of them have validated it with their respective barangays. This is important because in the CSO assembly, projects from the PSAs and projects identified by the CSOs shall be prioritized together. Thus, for planning cycle 2016, there was no final summary of identified need for all the barangays of Mutia. Rather, the ACT used a previous list of identified projects when presenting in the CSO assembly.

Nonetheless, in barangays that have already conducted BAs, the ACT coordination has stated that the community were very active during the assemblies. However, a comparison can be made between the level of participation of rural barangays and urban barangays. Urban barangays have noticeably lesser participation rate that those of the rural ones. Yet the ACT coordinator stated that since it is the municipality's third cycle in participatory planning, the barangays have already recognized the importance of taking part in the process. Barangays view assemblies as a means by which they can influence decision-making, and help in identifying the main issues in the community. In concrete terms, assemblies and workshops are seen as necessary steps to avail of the projects offered by government agencies.

Based on the responses of the key informants, there is a lack of familiarity regarding BUB process in general. The respondents identify more with the KALAHY-CIDSS-NCDDP program, and have a hard time delineating it from the BUB program. Both the barangay officials and the

community representatives who were interviewed were not familiar with the expanded Barangay Development Council (BDC), neither its role nor its composition. Most of the barangay chairpersons stated they have yet to convene the expanded BDC where community representatives are included. For the community representatives, they stated that they elect a CSO chairperson, but they identify them as the Barangay Sub-Project Management Committee (BSPMC) Chairperson and not as BDC Vice-Chairperson. In the KALAHI-CIDSS-NDCP process, the BSPMC is tasked to oversee the sub-project implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and sustainability of the project after completion. It is the BSPMC Chairperson who also acts as the overall representative of the CSOs in other meetings and assemblies. Thus in effect, for the respondents, the BSPMC is the BDC Vice-Chairperson.

In terms of the selection of the community volunteers and the BDC Vice-Chairperson, respondents stated that it was democratic and that, no political influence was observed. The role of the barangay chairpersons in the process was minimal to none. Since it was the ACT facilitating the process, the barangay chairpersons were merely spectators in the election and did not affect the results of the selection process. This insight was validated by the CSO groups and community representatives.

The barangay assemblies and participatory situation analysis workshops are vital cogs in the concept of participatory grassroots budgeting. Without the proper orientation at the barangay level, and proper identification of projects, it poses question to the essence of the “grassroots” that the BUB as a program is espousing. Since the social preparation was not properly implemented before the conduct of the CSO assembly, project identification relied in previous data, and was validated only after the projects were identified. This misstep in the early stage of the process derailed the whole process from the guidelines. Basically, the next steps were done in order to meet the requirements.

CSO Assembly

The CSO assembly is an exclusive meeting of all CSOs, POs, community/grassroots organizations facilitated by DILG at the municipal/city level. This is conducted to gather, analyze, and share results of poverty situation in the locality, identify strategies and present them to the LDC or LPRAT, and LSB. CSOs shall also be oriented on their role in local governance and select CSO representatives to the LRPAT. (JMC No. 5)

CSO Invitation

The CSO assembly was a month delayed from the schedule stipulated in the JMC. CSO assemblies were organized through the directives of the city and municipal DILG. Invitations were signed by the mayor and was prepared and distributed by the DILG, either by hand delivering to the residences of the CSO representatives or via the barangay captains, secretaries

or representatives. In all three municipalities, invitations were released by the C/MLGOO within the 2-week allowance required by the DILG. However, CSO representatives mentioned they only received the invitation 5 days to a week before the assembly in the case of Dapitan, and 3-5 days before in the case of Polanco and Mutia. Despite this, most representatives have felt the improvement in the longer lead time given to them in this planning cycle compared to the preceding years. This, according to some, gave them enough time to adjust their schedules to be able to attend the event. However, most claim that the lead time no longer allowed them to consult their members regarding the projects that they will bring to the assembly.

CSOs to be invited to the assembly were based on the map constructed by the CM. This means that CSOs invited to participate are no longer limited to LGU-accredited organizations but also included those CSOs registered with national agencies or recognized in the barangay. In the case of Mutia, for example, since the LGU does not have a listing of CSOs in the locality aside from the 5 accredited CSOs, the list of invitees were solely dependent on the CM's CSO map. In the other two sites under study, although invitees were heavily dependent on the map, not all CSOs mapped were invited to the assembly. In Dapitan City, for example, some respondents argue that the city government requested for the CSO map and only identified a number of CSOs that should be given invitation letters. In the case of Polanco, only 58 of the 65 organizations mapped were selected and invited by the MLGOO on the basis of the following: (i) active presence in the municipality, (ii) participation in previous LGU activities, and (iii) LGU recognition. Excluded organizations include coop/association of municipal employees, coconut farmers and barangay level farmers'. On the exclusion of the coop/association of municipal employees in the CSO assembly, one can presume that the reason might be their ineligibility to be elected as member of the LPRAT. Moreover, the MPDC was the president of the employees' cooperative. On the other hand, associations of barangay level employees were invited. An issue that could be raised is the difference between the participation of municipal level and barangay level employees. There is a need to clarify the rationale of excluding municipal employees while allowing barangay employees to be elected in the LPRAT, and hence, invited to the assembly.

Some of the LGU and DILG representatives argue that the funds provided for the CSO assembly limit the number of CSOs that can be invited, thus explaining selective invitation of CSOs. Funds provided to each LGU are the same regardless of the size or the number of CSOs mapped or intended to be invited. This disincentivizes the organizers to invite as much CSOs as possible.

As per JMC, aside from the letters of invitation, public notices need to be posted in three conspicuous places. The JMC also requires that public posting include the list of CSOs, as well as the contact details of the person/office that CSOs can contact to express interest to participate. Public notices in Dapitan City were posted at the city hall, near the public market and near the

city health office. The team however was not able to notice the posting during the CSO assembly. At the time interviews were conducted by the team, the DILG staff was able to show the team the public posting. She argues that a list of CSOs was also provided but was removed by the DILG after the assembly. Further, the notice include no contact details for those who wish to participate. In the case of Polanco, notices of the assembly were also publicly posted. However, many of the CSO respondents were unable to recall seeing the notice in any of the places specified by LGU officials. The research team, however, saw one such posting in the DILG building where the assembly took place. One CSO respondent also recalled seeing another in the public market. The public notice specified that the enumerated CSO representatives were enjoined to attend, but like in the case of Dapitan, there is no provisions for CSOs not in the list which might be interested to participate. Also similarly, in Mutia, despite the LGU's claim that there were public postings in the Municipal hall bulletin board and the municipal gym, respondents from the CSOs state that they did not notice any public invitation to the assembly. Further, even though CSO leaders may have read the post, representatives interviewed hold that they may still have skipped the event because they were not formally invited to the event. It is safe to say that in all three municipalities, the contents of the notices ran contrary to the purpose of the public announcement and indirectly sent a wrong signal to CSOs that only those in the list or those who have received the invitation can participate.

Apart from the invitations and public posting, there are also other means of inviting CSOs. In Dapitan City, the CM personally invited some other CSOs who were not part of the LGU-selected list. He particularly focused on 4Ps parent leaders and SEA-K representatives with the premise that of all the CSOs, these representatives will most probably have no political color. Similarly, respondent in Polanco stated that they received text messages regarding the assembly even before they received the official letter. In the case of Mutia, it was the ACT coordinator who contacted and ensured that all barangays have a BSPMC/ Kalahi representatives in the assembly.

CSO Attendance

Mixed responses were given by the respondents as to the openness of actual event. In Dapitan City, for example, while some claim that non-invited organizations are welcome to participate, others reckon that an invitation was needed to be presented before the representative was allowed to enter the premises. In addition to this, some reports were received from various sources that some CSO representatives were prevented from entering the venue during the day of the event. Some respondents explained that there was limited budget for the CSO assembly, and that additional CSOs can no longer be accommodated. Others hold that these representatives barred from entering were not allied with the city government and would only cause distraction. Another respondent argued that these people were not part of any CSO in

Dapitan City, but rather, from a different city. When the CLGOO who was not present during the assembly received this information, he established a fact finding committee to investigate on the matter. He argued that results of the investigation do not support the claims that some were prohibited from entering. The research team, despite exerting efforts to identify these CSOs, was not able to trace those who were not allowed to participate.

Conversely, in the case of Polanco, two representatives from the farmers sector who were not included in the list of invitees were able to participate in the Assembly. This is despite the fact that there was a list of CSOs attached to the public notices. How these two representatives who did not receive invitation were able to attend the assembly was not covered in the interviews.

In the case of Mutia, only the newly-selected BSMPC were not part of the mapping but attended the assembly. Invitation may probably be from the ACT coordinator who ensured that each barangay had a representative in the assembly. Other than these representatives, only those in the mapping attended the assembly. This may probably be explained by respondents' comment that they would have self-excluded themselves from the event if no formal invitation has been sent to them.

CSO assembly attendance in Dapitan City was far from expected. Representatives from the DILG and the LGU expressed dismay at the low attendance rate. Of the 75 expected CSOs to attend, only 39 CSOs (52%) were present. Attendance in Polanco and Mutia were better, i.e. 86% of organizations invited in Polanco and 90% of those invited in Mutia were present. Since transportation cost as a reason for non-attendance can be ruled out because the DILG reimbursed the travel expenses of participants, low attendance rate may be due to a number of other reasons. In the case of Dapitan City, most respondents deem that non-attendance is primarily due to lack of information regarding the event. Even though it is possible that invitations were really sent out but were just not received for whatever reason, the possibility that some were intentionally not invited cannot be discounted. This may be due to conflict in political affiliation and/or inactivity of CSOs in LGU affairs. Further, most respondents were not able to see any of the notices posted by the city DILG. While political affiliation has been a factor in non-participation in Dapitan City, respondents in Polanco and Mutia stated that their reason for non-attendance is apolitical. Reasons given in Polanco for non-attendance include conflict in work schedule and personal difficulty. Similarly, in Mutia, one reason cited is work commitments. One respondent who was in the CSO map but was not able to attend argue that he has not received the invitation letter from the DILG. The gap in the information here lies in the delivery of the letter. Based on observation, there was no clear intention from the LGUs to exclude certain CSOs.

Table 3 also shows sectoral composition of CSOs who participated in the assembly. In Dapitan City, the more dominant sectors based on the CSO map are the same sectors who were well-

represented in the assembly. However, 28.2% of the attendees were either 4Ps parent leaders or SEA-K representatives, outnumbering the representatives from the farmers (23.1%) and fisherfolks sector (15.4%), which are the most dominant sectors in the city. Note that there are some of the pantawid parent leaders who attended the assembly who were not part of the CSO map.

Most of the CSO representatives in Polanco were agricultural in focus. Almost two-thirds of those who attended represented farmers' or irrigators' associations. The second most represented are the organizations of barangay workers. This proportion is similar to the CSO map, wherein more than half of the identified groups were farmers' association. It is also comparable to the breakdown of accrediting line agencies, with DA followed by DSWD as the agencies with the most number of accredited CSOs in Polanco. It exhibits that the attendees to the assembly were representative of the CSOs in the municipality.

In Mutia, the BDC Vice Chairpersons composed most of the participants. Thirteen (13) out of the 16 barangays were represented by their respective BDC Vice-Chairpersons. Next to BDC Vice-chairs, CSO assembly was dominated in number by cooperatives, 4Ps and SKAs, which are also the dominant sectors in the CSO map. Although it seems that the basic sector organizations such as farmers and women may not be great in number, invited participants are the leaders of their corresponding basic sector federation in the entire municipality of Mutia.

The high participation of the Pantawid parent leaders and SEA-K representatives is evident in two of three municipalities under study, i.e. Dapitan and Mutia. This leads to say that 4Ps parent leaders and SEA-K representatives may have been overrepresented in the assembly. Note that SEA-K associations, although organized by the DSWD, are not federated. Pantawid parent leaders, although federated, were mapped and invited separately. This is in contrast with the senior citizen, women, and other basic sectors, where only the federation and city-wide organizations were usually mapped and invited. This leads to say that there is a need to standardize those who should be invited. Prior to the sending out of invitations, a position should be made whether to open the invitation to all individual organizations or only to the federation, if present. This should be applied across sectors to avoid overrepresentation.

Similarly, one of the issues that can be explored is the scope of coverage of the organizations that should be prioritized in LGU affairs, in this case the BUB. 61.5% of the attendees in Dapitan, 56% in Polanco and 36% in Mutia were barangay-based organizations⁴. This may pose problems in various aspects especially in the problem and project identification part. First, if CSO map that was used for the CSO assembly was constructed within 3 months, a number of

⁴ Note that 4Ps Parent leaders and SEA-K representatives are barangay-based in nature.

barangays in the cities/municipalities might not have been covered and profiled at the time the invitations were released. Second, in terms of the actual conduct of the BUB process, projects CSOs will identify during the assembly will most probably be situated in barangays where they reside rather than in underserved areas. Approach might not be holistic, but rather, location-based. Third and lastly, there is a higher chance that the CSO representatives that will be elected to be part of the LPRAT will be barangay-based. There is then a higher risk that projects that will be included in the LPRAP, as well as the beneficiaries that will be identified, will be to their barangay's advantage.

Another issue is the participation of government employee associations, e.g. Barangay Workers and Government Employees Cooperative, in the BUB. While participation of such organizations is low in Dapitan City and Mutia, this might have been an issue in Polanco. While municipal employees are excluded in the assembly, barangay employees were not. Among these groups are the Barangay Secretaries Association and Barangay Treasurers Association. On the one hand, government employee associations have a value integral to the functions of the represented sector, thus, it creates an avenue where they could exchange best practices and organize activities for continuing education. Including these organizations might be beneficial to discussion since these organizations are knowledgeable of the needs of the city and/or individual barangays. Some government employee organizations maintain or have access to certain data and information that can be used in problem and project identification, say for example the BHS survey and Barangay profiles. Conversely, participation of such organizations can be perilous because these groups might bring a persona that can dominate discussions and control decisions. While employees of the municipalities are prohibited to be elected as members of the LPRAT, it is unclear whether the same is applicable to barangay employee groups.

If the participation of these organizations were to be an issue, participation of government employees as representative of non-government organizations might also be worth looking into. Specifically, a representative from the Parent-Teacher Association in Dapitan and Homeowner Association in Polanco were employed by the DILG and the LGU, respectively. Current guidelines, however, also prohibit them from being elected as part of the LPRAT. Thus, their participation is only limited to issue identification during the assembly. This solves the problem of possible political interference in constructing the LPRAP.

What is probably more worrisome is the participation of the former vice-mayor as a business sector representative in the CSO assembly in Dapitan City. Although she asserted that she no longer is a public servant but is now part of the civil society, being a former vice-mayor may have given her control, intentional or not, on the results of the LPRAT selection and project identification. While the guidelines restrict LGU officials, employees, and relatives to be elected

as a CSO representative to the LPRAT, it does not provide guidelines on the participation of former politicians. While she no longer is affiliated with the city government, her future plans in politics is still unclear, based on interviews. Furthermore, although some respondents have expressed that she has a slight rift with the administration as a result of the previous election, it is still worth noting that she is still politically-allied with the LCE.

Selection of CSO representatives in the LPRAT

The selection of CSO representatives in the LPRAT follows the provision of the JMC. Selection was facilitated by the CM in all three municipalities. LGU representatives had no involvement in the process. CSO representatives who attended the assembly elected the CSOs that will represent them in the LPRAT, given the guidelines provided by the community mobilizer. Note that only one community mobilizer handled all three municipalities, which probably explains the similarity in the conduct of the process. Modifications requested by participants were allowed by the CM as long as it follows the guidelines provided by the JMC.

Table 3 also provides sectoral composition of CSO members in the LPRAT. After the LPRAT representatives have been selected, three signatories were chosen with the following criteria as stipulated in the JMC: 1. a member of the LDC, 2. a pantawid parent leader, 3. a representative from the basic sector

CSO representatives in the LPRAT of Dapitan City was composed of one representative per sector, except in the case of the more dominant sectors, i.e. farmers, fisherfolks and Pantawid Parent leaders, which were allowed to select 2 each because of extra seats in the LPRAT. CSO representatives opted to make selection intra-sector, that is, representative is still by sector but nomination and election was done by the whole body regardless of the sector they represent. In the case where the representative represents multiple sectors, the organization specified in the invitation letter was followed. This leads us to say that those who attended without formal invitation were not eligible of getting selected as part of the LPRAT. Contrarily, one representative who was invited as a rep of a farmers' association was recognized as a representative of a cooperative, explaining why there were three representatives from the farmers sector in the LPRAT. Relatedly, three of the elected representatives were not part of the mapping.

Three signatories were selected by the whole body from the elected representatives. The former vice-mayor, which is the business sector representative, was selected as one of the signatories and the LPRAT co-chair. According to most respondents, they selected the former vice-mayor because there is no person in the group more qualified, knowledgeable and experienced than her. The respondents still view her as a politician that can represent them in a body, in this case, the LPRAT. Arguably, by selecting a person with political identity as a co-chair

of the LPRAT defeats the purpose of genuine grassroots participation. Despite following the guidelines in ensuring that no political intervention will be present in any way, the fact that a politician participated in the assembly, and worse, is part of the LPRAT, makes the whole process dubious. Moreover, her selection as co-chair did not follow the rules given by the JMC. Basic sector organizations, as defined by the JMC 5, *“should be one of the following sectors: farmers and landless rural workers, artisanal fisherfolk, formal labor and migrant workers, workers in the informal sector, indigenous people and cultural communities, women, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children, or urban poor.”* This does not include the business sector. This, although might be unintentional, was overlooked during the CSO assembly.

Similar to the case of Dapitan, participants in Polanco were asked by the CM to elect among themselves a representative per sector. Selection within groups was observed to be by consensus instead of election. Since there were 12 seats on the LPRAT and only 10 defined sectors, it was agreed upon by the body that the 11th seat be given to the farmers’ association since they were the most numerous group, and the 12th representative be selected from all the participants. Note that the 11th and 12th seat were given to members of farmers’ associations. Having won three out of the twelve positions in the LPRAT, it could be viewed that the representatives from the agricultural sector dominated the selection. However, a better focus would be if there were sectors that were marginalized or not represented. Since the first step in the selection specified all relevant sector and asked them to select their own representative, all sector were given a voice in the LPRAT. The number of the representation from the agricultural sector could then be viewed as a reflection of the composition of the community.

For the selection of signatories, representatives were first matched to the requirements provided by the JMC. As such, the 4Ps parent leader was automatically included. A Farmers’ CSO representative was included as well for his participation in the Local School Board. The 3rd signatory was elected, again by hand raising, among the other basic sector groups. Farmers’ associations were excluded in the nominations since a farmer representative was already chosen as a signatory. The elected third signatory was the religious sector representative. For the selection of co-chair, one of the PO representative asked the signatories to introduce themselves first so that the group would have an informed decision.

Mutia, which adopted the enhanced process, selected 5 BDC vice-chairs and 5 CSO representatives to represent the body in the LPRAT. The BDC vice-chairs were separated from the CSO representatives, and selected among themselves who will represent then in the LPRAT. CSO representatives were selected through consensus while BDC-VC representatives were selected through nomination and voting. In selecting the three signatories, CSO group and BDC-vice chairs selected separately from the 5 elected representatives who will be signatory.

An issue that could be cited in the selection of BDC vice-chair reps in the LPRAT is the representation of BDC Vice-Chairpersons in each barangay. This stems from the incomplete social preparation. As discussed in the previous section, only 9 out of the 16 barangays have conducted their barangay assemblies before the CSO assembly. Therefore, 7 more barangays have not selected their community volunteers. The ACT Coordinator stated that for those barangays who have not yet had their BAs, the BSPMC Chairpersons from the previous cycle stood as the BDC Vice-Chairperson.

Poverty Situation Analysis and Issue Identification

Issues that will serve as reference for the LPRAP formulation should be identified during the CSO assembly. As per JMC, *“the assembly should review, validate and analyze social and economic data and propose solutions to its concerns and problems”*. PSA conducted by each municipality is outlined in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Details of LPRAP Workshop

	Dapitan	Polanco	Mutia
Data Presented	2010 CBMS results c/o CPDO staff	2008 CBMS results c/o MFDC	PSA 2014 c/o ACT coordinator
PSA workshop			
Process	Solution tree process c/o CM: participants were grouped together to identify core problems, immediate causes, secondary causes and effects in four areas, i.e. Governance, Social Services, Economic Development and Environmental Services		Each team looked at the PSA results (posted on the board) and chose problem that should be prioritized
Use of issues identification	No evidence that issues identified were used as basis for project identification		Not used in project identification. Top 10 projects from the PSA 2014 were automatically used and were just ranked
Outputs			
Identification of issues	yes	yes	yes
Identification of projects	yes	yes	yes
Identification of beneficiaries	no	no	no

In the case of those which adopted the regular process, i.e. Dapitan and Polanco, poverty situation which was presented were both sourced from the CBMS. Note, however, that the data used were rather outdated. Despite this, data presented, specifically in Dapitan City, could be useful in a way that it highlighted certain barangays who fared poorly in each specific area. Ideally, such data can be used especially in identifying beneficiaries of projects. However, there was no noted utilization of the presented data during the PSA workshop in either of the two

municipalities. Rather, they stated that discussion were based on their common felt needs. After issue identification, menu of projects was presented and was selected from by the participants. Despite having identified the most pressing urgent needs in the locality, there was no proof that these identified issues were used in selecting the projects. The selection of projects from the menu was rather crude. In Dapitan City, projects which sounded appealing were automatically selected through consensus. These project were no longer validated and checked whether they can address the issues/problems identified by the CSOs during the workshop. Of the 30 projects identified during the assembly in Dapitan City, only 6 were in line with the identified problems in the locality. Similarly, in the case of Polanco, there was no observed utilization of the PSA results in the selection of projects to propose. However, the identified core problems, from the economic and social sectors, and most of the identified projects are related to each other.

The process is rather different in the case of Mutia, which adopted the enhanced process. In the enhanced BUB process, it is during the CSO assembly that the organizations and the barangays prioritize their identified projects. Scrutinized closely, the workshop for FY 2016 in Mutia were done simply in obedience to the guidelines and bears not much weight in the project identification process. The barangays use the PSAs as their basis. However, in the FY2016 cycle, KC process was not harmonized with the BUB process seamlessly. At the time of the CSO assembly, only 7 of the 16 barangays have done their PSAs. Thus an analysis of the current situation in Mutia cannot be done. Further, for those who have done PSAs, no barangay has conducted the third BA to validate the results of the workshop. Thus, there was an incomplete set of identified projects. Nevertheless, an overall PSA was conducted during the CSO assembly. However, the results of the municipal PSA was not used for project identification. Instead, the results of the municipal PSA during the 2nd cycle (done in 2012) were used as it was the latest one that considered all 16 barangays. The list of projects is a summary of the most pressing need in the municipality based on the past PSAs. This made the CSO assembly PSA debatable.

During the prioritization process, both the CSOs and the BDC-Vice Chairpersons were given the chance to vote. The criteria set by the facilitators were: time component (25%), availability of resources (15%), beneficiaries (25%), and sustainability (35%). Remember however that the CSOs did not add any projects to the list presented by the ACT. Thus, the projects to be prioritized came from the previous PSAs alone, and no proposed projects from the organizations. This is vital because this is the only chance in the entire BUB process that the CSO, as an organization, can propose sector-based projects.

Extent of CSO Participation in the Assembly

Actual participation of those present can be described as generally dynamic and participative. In Dapitan City, CSOs freely expressed personal comments from selection of CSO representatives to PSA workshop and project identification. There were minor disagreements and arguments like in the manner of nomination and selection, sectoral representation of the nominated representatives, status of implementation of BUB projects, PSA workshop proper and project identification. These, despite the absence of the CPDO and the CLGOO, were handled very well by the CM. Some issues which the CM was not able to address were consulted with the DILG regional coordinator via phone calls. In Polanco, all the CSO representatives were able to voice out their concerns during the assembly. Breaking down into groups allowed all to articulate their ideas. This might not have been possible if the whole process had been conducted as a plenary. Finally, according to the respondents in Mutia, the attendees were equally active in the discussion. No particular organization or BDC Vice-Chairperson dominated the discussion. In fact, the LGU and the CSO representatives stated that distinction could not be made if the fellow participants were organizations leaders, or BDC-Vice Chairpersons.

While participation is generally fair, some participants are distinguishably more active than the others in some areas. Take for example the active participation of the CSO co-chair/former vice-mayor in Dapitan City, even reaching the point of domination at times. While her knowledge on the LGU's problems brought about by her experience in public service is acknowledged, the control she had over the PSA workshop discussion and during project identification, as well as the influence she had on other participants was clear-cut. CSO representatives interviewed by the team did not find problems with the co-chair's active participation since they still view her as a leader. Similarly, while no CSO representative or facilitator singlehandedly dominated the discussion in Polanco, some representatives (e.g. 4Ps parent leader) were observed to be more active and vocal than others. Varying level of participation may be due to some participants being more knowledgeable and vocal than the others. According to one of the co-chairs, since some of the discussions include technicalities, variation in level of participation may be due to the representatives' knowledge on the matter. According to her, some representatives, such as the retired teachers and senior citizens, demonstrated knowledge and provided significant insights during the workshop.

In the case of Mutia, the KC municipality, it was argued by the LGU and CSO representatives in the municipality that participation was the same. But according to the CM, there may be slight differences in the quality of participation of CSO representatives and the BDC vice chairs. While it can be said that the BDC vice chairs have more experience in conducting the PSA, their participation in the BUB process is rather new. Hence, they have little knowledge of what is

expected from them. This can be noted in the selection of representatives in the LPRAT. It was easier for the CSO representatives to discuss and select their representatives in the LPRAT compared to the BDC vice-chairs, who needed intervention and facilitation from the CM. Despite this, BDC vice-chairs were given chance to speak and assert their right in issue identification and project identification.

It is also worth-noting that some of the participants have already left even before project identification. This may demonstrate lack of interest on and appreciation of the BUB process. Of those who attended, only 29 (74%) were able to finish the assembly in Dapitan, 44 (88%) in Polanco, and 32 (82%) in Mutia.

LPRAT Orientation

Prior to the conduct of LPRAP Workshops at the city/municipal level, an LPRAT Orientation was conducted at the provincial level, where representatives from participating agencies and four representatives from each LPRAT, namely the LCE, SB Chair on Appropriation, C/MPDC, CSO co-chair and C/MLGOO come together in one venue to discuss the status of implementations of projects and menu of eligible projects by agency.

All, except the SB Chair on Appropriation, were not able to attend and only sent a proxy to represent Dapitan City. Interviews provide little proof that discussions made during the orientation were relayed to intended participants. Purpose of the orientation to make clear the guidelines and increase understanding of participants in preparation for the conduct of LPRAP workshop can be said to be defeated. All invitees in Mutia and Polanco (except for MPDC in Polanco) were able to attend the orientation.

While some of the respondents think that the orientation helped clarify some of the issues in conducting the LPRAP workshop, the time is limited to address all issues and queries of all participants. Further, explanation per line agency was not in-depth and might be too much to comprehend given the orientation was only a two-day event. Finally, according to the CM, BUB focal person of some of the implementing agencies were not able to attend the orientation. Instead, proxies were sent by the agencies. And so some issues and queries aimed at these agencies were not fully addressed.

LPRAP Workshop

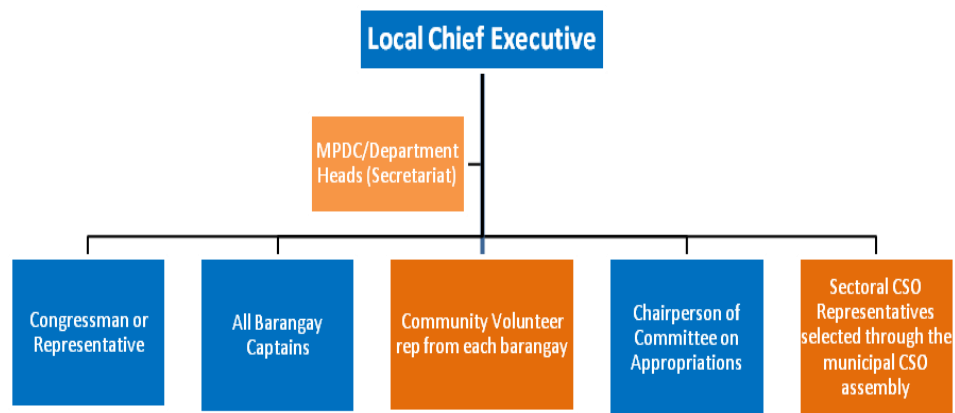
Composition of the LPRAT and EMDC

The LPRAT, which should compose of equal numbers of CSO and LGU representatives, participated in the LPRAP workshop intended to review previously identified strategies and priority poverty reduction projects and update the strategies to be undertaken by the LGU and

other stakeholders and incorporate the same in the LPRAP. CSO representatives were selected during the CSO assembly while the LGU representatives were selected by the LCE. There is no explicit guideline regarding selection of LGU representatives in the LPRAT in JMC 5. While Section 4.9 laid out which personalities from the government are eligible for membership in the LPRAT, no guideline was specified on which representatives to choose over others. Given such situation, it is often an exercise of the LCE’s prerogative in naming these members.

LPRAT in Dapitan City is composed of 11 representatives from the CSO and 10 from the LGU. LGU representatives in the LPRAT 2016 are the same as those in the LPRAT 2015. This may probably be the reason why the composition of government and non-government representatives are not equal. LPRAT in Polanco is composed of 24 members, with a 50-50 CSO-LGU ratio in accordance to the guidelines provided by the JMC. Composition of LGU-reps is typical, consisting of the LCE, sectoral heads, MLGOO, and municipal links. Composition of the LPRAT members in Mutia is quite interesting. It is well-noted that the representatives from the CSOs selected from the CSO assembly (5 from the sector and organizations, and 5 from the BDC Vice-Chairpersons) were automatically members of the LPRAT. However, the composition of the government representatives leaves some questions. In the EMDC are the heads of the various government departments, and representatives of national government agencies (e.g. municipal links, school district supervisors, etc.) The composition and structure of the EMDC is provided by **Figure 6** below.

Figure 6. EMDC Composition and Structure



On the other hand, the composition of government LPRAT representatives in Mutia is an interesting mix. Three out of the 10 LPRAT members are elected Sangguniang Bayan officers. In addition to this, the Chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations was not a member of the

LPRAT, although the Chairperson of the Committee on Infrastructure is. Also, the SB Secretary was chosen as a member of the LPRAT. Respondents stated that the Municipal Mayor chose the government representatives of the LPRAT.

Invitation and attendance

Schedule of LPRAP workshops were finalized right after the LPRAT orientation. According to respondents, invitations to the LRPAP workshops were release right after the orientation. Note, however, that the schedule of workshop in Polanco and Mutia were set less than 2 weeks after the LPRAT orientation, not abiding by the 2-week lead time required by the JMC. This, according to the CM, is due to tight schedule in the LGU and deadline set by the regional DILG for the submission of the LPRAP.

In terms of attendance in Dapitan, all 11 CSO representatives in the LPRAT attended the workshop, while 3 LGU members and 3 proxies were present. City budget office, City health office and DepEd representatives, which were part of the LPRAT, were not present during the workshop. LCE, which is the LPRAT chair, did not attend the workshop but was represented by the City Administrator. LCE rep as well as the SP member on appropriation left even before actual PSA workshop was conducted. In addition to LPRAT members, other LGU employees attended, namely representative from the city mayor's office and city ENRO, and a statistician from the CPDO. Additional LGU employees were allowed to participate in PSA workshop and project identification.

In the case of Polanco, 7 out of 12 CSO representatives and 9 out of 12 LGU representatives attended the LPRAP Workshop. The mayor was represented by the vice-mayor in opening the program, but she did not stay for the workshop itself. The co-chair was not present due to a medical operation. One signatory was also absent. Moreover, 5 additional LGU officials participated in the LPRAT workshop, namely, the Municipal Veterinarian, 2 KALAHI-CIDSS Area Coordinators, a Principal of an elementary school, and the Agrarian Reform Program Officer.

In Mutia, note that the municipality conducted two LPRAP workshops due to invalid projects proposed during the first LPRAP workshop. During the first LPRAP workshop, 9 out of the 10 CSO/BDC vice-chairs were present. For the LGU reps, 2 were absent (MAO, and SB Member) based on the attendance sheets gathered by the researchers. Official minutes, of the meeting, however, reflected that all 20 LPRAT members were present during the workshop. Other head of agencies which are not LRPAT members were also invited. They include the municipal rural sanitation inspector, representative from the rural health unit, and the municipal engineer. The MPDO states that they were not included in the PSA groupings, but are consulted for technical advice. The LPRAT members have the sole voting capacity during the workshop.

The issue of the participation of non-LPRAT LGU representatives now arises. If the participation of non-LPRAT members is limited to observing and providing technical assistance to the LPRAT, then their attendance should be welcomed and encouraged. However, in the case of Dapitan and Polanco, non-LPRAT members were allowed to participate in project identification, were given a say on prioritization and were given voting rights. Their participation is not problematic in this year's cycle since a lot of LGU members were not able to attend the workshop. However, in the event that all LGU members are present and all other attendees are also allowed to participate, LGU domination might be an issue. Take Polanco, for example. Calculating the additional LGU participants and removing the CSO representative who left the workshop after lunch due to a personal emergency, only 32% of the attendees of the workshop is a CSO representation. This is a significant change in composition compared to the designed 50-50 distribution of representation within the LPRAT. Clear guidance on who are allowed to participate in the discussions should be set forth.

Also, while the JMC stipulates that the RPRAT is to provide a representative to provide technical assistance to the LPRAT, no representative from the RPRAT was seen during the workshop in all three municipalities. This may probably be the reason why issues/problems in the LPRAPs submitted by the LGUs have been observed.

Project Identification and Prioritization

As per guidelines, the C/MPDC is tasked to facilitate while the CM is tasked to observe, oversee and assist during the LPRAP workshop. How project identification was done was different per LGU. In the case of Dapitan City, the CM facilitated the workshop proper by separating the CSO from the LGU representatives present (regardless if they are part of the LPRAT or not). Each group discussed and identified specific projects with intended beneficiaries and proposed budget allocations. Barangay-level data presented during the CSO assembly were no longer presented and utilized during the workshop. Since no data was presented, it can be said that identification of beneficiaries was based on common felt needs and shared knowledge of the participants. No mechanism was conducted to validate the identified beneficiaries. There were two separate lists from which the final list of projects was drawn from, i.e. the CSO list and the LGU list.

The CSO list was based on the projects identified during the CSO assembly. During discussion among CSO members of the LPRAT, actual beneficiaries were selected especially for infrastructure projects. Budgets were also estimated for most projects. While some projects identified during the assembly were no longer included in the CSO list (7 projects), some projects which were never mentioned during the CSO assembly were included in the list (4 projects). New CSO projects include school library, faculty room and school furniture seats intended for the DCNHS, and a city bus terminal. These projects were proposed by the co-

chair/former vice mayor. According to her, a letter of request addressed to the mayor and copy furnished to the co-chair explains the proposal of the first three projects for BUB funding. Coincidentally (or not so coincidentally), two of the three projects requested by the DCNHS were also part of the LGU list.

The LGU list, on the other hand, is composed of projects that were discussed by LGU representatives during the workshop. Since the list of projects proposed during the CSO assembly were posted in the venue, LGU representatives used the CSO list as basis for the projects they will identify. Of the 11 projects identified by the LGUs, 6 (55%) were the same as the CSO projects proposed during CSO assembly. Since the LGU representatives started with the CSO assembly list, it is safe to say that LGU reps validated results of the assembly, and at the same time, proposed projects that they deem useful for Dapitan City. Given the technical knowledge of the sector heads, if a project initially identified by the CSOs is backed by the LGU, it would most probably mean the project is needed in the locality.

The CSO list and LGU list of projects were prioritized jointly by CSO and LGU representatives present during the LPRAP workshop through an open, unstructured discussion. Initial agreement was to choose projects common to both lists before prioritizing the remaining projects. However, projects such as irrigation system and provision of potable water supply to Barangay Ilaya, which were both identified by CSOs and the LGU reps, were not included in the LPRAP workshop list. Beneficiaries were finalized based on knowledge of sector heads and CSOs representatives on who needs the projects most, with exception to the school fences. During the workshop, there were complaints from a Pantawid parent leader that little or no projects were given to her barangay. According to her, she will not leave unless a project be given to her barangay. To satisfy her, the LGU representatives and the co-chair agreed to provide school fences to schools in the barangays where the CSOs reps who attended reside. The community mobilizer argued that identification of beneficiaries should be done or approved by the representative of the DepEd. However, since no representative from DepEd was present during the LPRAP workshop, this plan pushed through. During FGDs with sector heads, a representative from the DepEd, which was not the LPRAT member, expressed that they were not informed of their involvement in the LPRAT or the BUB. She, however, argued that if a representative from DepEd was present during the workshop, he/she would have been able to assist them in identifying needs of schools in Dapitan since they have a database of all schools which includes data on existing equipment and facilities.⁵

⁵ The team, however, was not able to get in touch with the DepEd representative in the LRPAT.

One of the bottlenecks encountered by the LPRAT in Dapitan City is the refusal of the Sangguniang Panlungsod to issue an SB resolution approving the 2016 LPRAP for the City. Complaints by the SB members questioning their non-participation in project identification were received even by the regional DILG. The JMC limits the participation of the SB in the BUB to the accreditation of local CSOs and the review, adoption and endorsement of the LPRAP to be submitted to be RPRAT. Further, the SB chair on appropriation is a member of the LPRAT and should be involved in the LPRAP workshop, hence it cannot be said that the SB is uninformed of the proceedings of the workshop. However, it could be noted that the SB chair on appropriation, although present during the earlier part of the workshop, was not able to participate in project identification and prioritization. Upon interview, he claimed he was invited to the workshop as a representative of an organization and not as an SB chair. It can then be inferred that LGU members in the LPRAT lack orientation on their roles as members of the LPRAT. This issue was settled after discussion with the regional DILG and CM. Also, since the LGU is beating the deadlines set by the region, the SB gave way and issued the SB resolution as required by the RPRAT.

In the case of Polanco, the problem tree analysis was used, where each participant was given freedom to choose a group of their interest, although it was advised to go to the group according to their specialization. Smaller groups include Economic, Environment, Infrastructure and (2) Social sub-groups. Most of the groups during the PSA were a mixture of CSO and LGU representatives. Output include core problems and projects that they deemed capable of solving the core problem. These projects were later utilized in the project prioritization proper. Notable here is how one group actually utilized CBMS data to promote the urgency of their identified core problem. Members of the Infrastructure group included in their presentation that 20% of the municipality is still without access to potable water. This is the only concrete utilization of data that the author has observed. Note that the municipal engineer was in this group and he was conducting a feasibility study on potable water at that time.

Before the prioritization, the sole CSO signatory in attendance has left the workshop to attend to a family emergency. At this point, each group was allowed to include one of their identified projects. Hence, the initial round yielded 6 projects. To use up all the remaining unallocated funds, the team discussed among themselves, facilitated by the MPDC, on what other projects to include. The MPDC gave priority to one farmer CSO representative. He proposed to include a livelihood program. However, this type of project, providing facilities and capital, is not included in the menu of programs anymore. The MPDC suggested to instead include the Shared Service Facilities (SSF) project by the DTI, which he explained to be similar in spirit of what the CSO representative requested. The rest of the 2nd round projects were arrived at by discussion and consensus among the LPRAT members, albeit more on the LGU side.

During the workshop, no concrete lists either from the CSO or from the LGU side were utilized. The CSO side has a list of prioritized projects arrived at in the CSO assembly. However, the list was simply projected during the preliminary part of the workshop. It was not explicitly utilized to arrive at the final LPRAP list. The primary concern here is the relevance of conducting the PSA during the assembly if its output would not be used concretely during the workshop. In effect, the LPRAT workshop was simply a duplication of the CSO Assembly, albeit with a different composition of participants. The LGU side, on the other hand, also do not have a list of preferred projects. Nonetheless, the MPDC confided to the research team after the program that the Mayor had expressed his preference for two 4wd tractors and an integrated bus terminal.

In the case when the municipality adopts the enhanced process, the EMDC should be assembled by the LCE, and the LPRAT should be convened as a technical working group. Projects identified by the LPRAT would then need to be validated and approved by the EMDC. One misstep in the conduct of the enhanced process in Mutia is the fact that the EMDC was not convened in any way, neither before the LPRAP workshop nor for the validation of the projects identified. Based on the interviews, the BDC Vice-Chairs were not familiar with the EMDC and its role. The BDC Vice-Chairs have also yet to receive invitation for such meeting. Also, based on the minutes of the LPRAT and other meetings conducted in line with the BUB process, there was no mention of the EMDC.

In any case, the LPRAT was convened to discuss the priority projects for the municipality. The members also did a PSA for the whole municipality. They were divided into groups discussing the environment, governance, economy, and the social aspects of the locality. However, the results of the municipal PSA were not used as the basis for the selection of projects. Rather, what happened was that the Co-Chair of the LPRAT presented the prioritized projects from the CSO assembly, while for the LGU side, the project presented were those that were in the pipeline of the LGU as identified by the MDC. Again, it is important to reiterate that the CSO identified projects are from the previous round of municipal PSA result of Mutia (since the current round of social preparation has yet to be completed). Comparing the CSO and the LGU list, a discussion ensued on which projects shall be funded. An agreement was made that projects that will not be funded by the BUB funds will be funded either by the 20% development fund, or other funds that the government can get.

However, the LPRAP workshop only identified the projects, but not the location or beneficiaries of the projects. Especially for the roads, it is the LGU that decided on what parts of the municipality shall be concreted. Even the Barangay Captains were not aware regarding the fact that they have been chosen as beneficiaries for the project. The researchers cross checked the beneficiaries and whether the barangay captains are politically allied with the Municipal Mayor.

Based on the record, the Municipal Mayor made no distinction in the choosing the location of road concreting. In essence, it was a technical decision rather than a political one. Barangay Captains from different political party were also given projects.

Quality of Participation

In terms of participation, probably having a separate CSO and LGU list is ideal as there is a higher chance that LGU representatives will overpower CSO representatives if the list were to be done jointly, be it intentional or not. In Polanco, the participants were given liberty to select the sub-group they're interested in, regardless of whether they come from the CSO or LGU. Although some of the CSO participants are really vocal and can discuss with LGU representatives, it is expected that LGU representatives dominate more in discussions.

The process in Dapitan and Mutia is acceptable in the manner that a separate CSO list that was initially constructed during the CSO assembly, and an LGU list that was created during the LPRAP workshop in the case of Dapitan and the pipelined projects of the LGU in the case of Mutia, were used as basis for the formulation of the LPRAP. This way, CSOs had the opportunity to bring forward projects independent of inputs from and influence of LGU officials/employees. Issues of project significance and feasibility can be ruled out because a joint prioritization through open discussion during the workshop was present.

Regardless of how the long lists of projects have been come up, prioritization in all three localities were done through joint, open discussion both from CSO- and LGU-representatives. Thus, while all had the liberty to suggest projects, some personalities have greater influence on the projects that will be prioritized and funded. While the process in Dapitan City was ideal, the political background and alliance of the co-chair in Dapitan City is questionable. Despite political problems within the party, it cannot be discounted that the views of the co-chair as a former public servant, which may be in line with development goals of the LCE, may have greatly affected the CSO list. Despite responses from the CSOs that their selection of the former vice mayor as CSO co-chair to the LPRAT is because of their established trust on the former public servant, and although there are no rules governing their participation, it is more appropriate to exclude oneself from getting involved in such exercise. This exemplifies the lack of appreciation of the goals of genuine participatory planning.

The influence of the former vice mayor goes beyond representing the business sector in the assembly and being included in the LPRAT. Domination in discussion and project identification both during the assembly and workshop was evident. During the separate construction of CSO and LGU list of projects, she was steering the CSO group, and at the same time, was consulting and discussing with the LGU group. Although the presence of sector heads is intended to provide technical support to the CSOs, the profile of the co-chair makes the turn of events

dubious. Projects which the co-chair claimed to have been requested from the office of the mayor and were included in both the CSO and LGU list serve as an illustration. Without the former vice mayor in the CSO group, requested projects will most probably not be included in the CSO list, and will have smaller chances to be included in the LPRAT. Thus, it can be said that the presence of the former vice mayor in a way sullies genuine grassroots participation.

In Polanco, one concern that was raised was the high dependence of the process on the MPDC. Although not a widely held opinion, a CSO respondent expressed that he felt their participation in the workshop as just going through the motion directed by the LGU representatives. He said that “hindi naman pwedeng kami ang masunod kasi sila ang mag-process” (we cannot insist on our preference since they will be the one processing). Another point is on how group discussion is controlled by LGU representatives. Although the LGU representatives might have been only trying to facilitate the discussion of the group, the mere fact that they have more representation in the discussion automatically gives their side an advantage in promoting their agenda. An extreme example of this is on how within the social sub-group, the presentation on education was prepared solely by the school principal.

In addition, the presence and participation of the mayor in the LPRAP workshop in Mutia can also be cited. The municipal mayor actively participated in the conduct of the whole workshop and explained his plans for Mutia. Although he reiterated that that event is designed for both CSOs and the LGU and that he encouraged other CSOs to speak up, it cannot be discounted that his presence somehow intimidated some to speak up. During the course of the workshop, the Municipal Mayor made a statement that external funds, such as funds from the KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP and the BUB, should be used in bigger infrastructure projects that the LGU cannot fund on its own. For the Mayor, the budget of the LGU, including the 20% development fund would not be sufficient to realize the priority projects of the LGU. Thus, funding opportunities should focus on infrastructure projects more than the livelihood projects. According to the respondents, the Mayor has committed to include livelihood programs proposed by the CSOs to be funded by the 20% development fund. With this compromise, it was agreed that much of the funding will be for the construction of roads and other infrastructure projects. During the interview with the mayor, he likened himself to a father of the family, where other family members may want to propose other things, but it is the father that knows what the best interests of the family are. While it can be said that the projects which the mayor wanted for Mutia were prioritized over those that were identified by the CSOs, the compromise that the CSO projects will still be funded by other sources, e.g. the 20% development fund sounds reasonable. This does not seem to defeat the purpose of participatory budgeting since the people from the grassroots still has a say on the projects that will be implemented, regardless of the source of funding.

LPRAP Projects Finalized during LPRAP Workshop

After the LPRAP workshop, a list of projects with intended beneficiaries and indicative budget allocation have been created. **Table 7** provides information on the proponents of the projects prioritized during the assembly.

Table 7. Project Proponents

	Dapitan	Polanco	Mutia
TOTAL PROJECTS	11	10	10
CSO-identified		10%	30%
LGU-identified	45%	82%	20%
jointly identified	55%	8%	50%

In Dapitan City, proponents of the projects can easily be detected because there was a separate CSO and LGU list. Of the 11 projects selected during the workshop, 64% have been identified during the assembly, while 36% have been identified only during the workshop. Note that CSO list has been modified during the LPRAP workshop, where a few projects have been dropped while some projects which were requested by a school from the office of the mayor and co-chair have been added. Of the long lists used in the workshop, 27% were from the LGU list while 73% were in the CSO list. This ratio is acceptable because all except 2 projects in the revised CSO list have already been included in the LPRAP. The high percentage of projects which are jointly identified only goes to show that projects identified by the CSOs during the assembly are validated by sector heads and are indeed needed in the locality.

In the case of Polanco, since no distinct CSO and LGU list were utilized in crafting the LPRAP, and most groups in the PSA were a mixture of CSO and LGU representatives, project proponents cannot be confidently identified by observing the proceedings alone. Despite this, observation of the proceeding indicated that all proposed projects were advanced by LGU representatives except one. In contrast, CSO- and LGU-side respondents were asked to identify the proponent of each project. Based on the respondents' identification of proponents, five projects were proposed by LGU representatives, two were jointly proposed, and only three proposed solely by the CSOs. In terms of allocation, this translates to 13 million pesos (80%) of budget going to LGU identified projects. Conversely, only 3.3 million went to fund CSO identified projects. This already includes CSO projects that were jointly identified with the LGU side. Of the projects finalized during the LPRAP workshop, one is a preferred project of the mayor.

In Mutia, half of the projects finalized during the LPRAP workshop were jointly identified by both CSOs and LGUs. It should be noted that all the approved projects in the LPRAP also

appeared in the CSO list of projects. While the type of project was jointly identified, the locations and/or beneficiaries of the projects were identified by the LGU (i.e. the barangays).

Finalization of Local Poverty Reduction Action Plan

The LGU’s LPRAP signed by selected signatories and the LCE was required to be submitted to the Regional office on December 15, 2014. Dapitan City only had 5 days between the conduct of workshop and LPRAP submission to draft project briefs and complete documentary requirements, while Polanco and Mutia had almost a month. Policy briefs and LPRAP were finalized by staff of the C/MPDO and were hand delivered to the DILG regional office. **Table 8** summarizes the changes made from the list of projects signed during the LPRAP workshop to the LRPAP initially submitted to the region.

Table 8. Changes in the List of Projects

	Dapitan	Polanco	Mutia
Total number of projects in final LPRAP	15	10	8
unchanged	9	5	5
Change in budget	2	5	3
increase		2	3
decrease	2	3	
change in project	4		2
new	3		
dropped	2		2
revised	1		

Of the projects prioritized during the LPRAP workshop in Dapitan City, budgets for 2 projects were reduced from those agreed upon during the workshop, i.e. CMBS from 2M to 1.9M, and fishport from 4M to 3.5M. These, according to a staff from the CPDO, were reduced due to budgetary requirements of the projects. 2 projects were dropped, i.e. cassava grater and fishing gear. These projects were said to have been dropped because these are already on-going projects. However, it should be noted that both projects were identified by the sector heads and if indeed these projects were already being funded, the sector heads should have known and should not have proposed them during the workshop. Finally, 2 new projects were included, i.e. rehabilitation of footbridge amounting to PhP1M and electrification of Barangay Aliguay and Selinog amounting to PhP6.1M. These new projects were identified by the staff from the CPDO and were said to have been included because there were extra funds available. What is questionable though is that these projects were identified neither during the CSO assembly nor the LPRAP workshop. Although the electrification projects, accounting for 20% of the total BUB funds, were considered by most respondents both on the LGU and CSO side to be

justifiable because these two island barangays are the only barangays that are yet to be electrified in Dapitan City, these were not identified by respondents as an urgent need of the LGU during the interviews. Further, these new projects and the other changes made in the list of projects were not consulted with the LPRAT anymore due to limited time before submission. While signatories were required to sign the final LPRAP prior to submission, the CSOs argue that they were not given enough time to review, and were not furnished with copies of the LPRAP for future reference despite efforts to request them. Although signatories acknowledged that they were informed that there are “minor” changes in the LPRAP from the list finalized during the workshop, they were not provided with the details of the changes made mainly because they were beating the December 15 deadline set by the region.

In Polanco, the issue regarding the LPRAP submission was the change in allocated budget from the LPRAP workshop to the document submitted by the LGU to the RPRAT. Of the five projects that had their budget adjusted, two were proposed by the CSOs while three were proposed by the LGU. However, the budget for the three projects were adjusted downwards, with the LGU proposed River control project receiving the additional funding. The MPDC stated that this happened during the course of writing the proposals, where the officials in charge revised the budget to reflect the actual amount needed. These budgetary adjustments were no longer relayed to CSO members of the LPRAT.

The LGUs received feedback from the region on December 19, 2014, only 4 days after the submission of the LPRAP. LPRAP and project briefs were hand delivered and explained by the CMs. Comments on the LPRAPs of Dapitan and Mutia were minor and only involved changing of project titles as prescribed by each agency. Revised LPRAPs were requested from the LGU 4 days after. A provincial-wide validation workshop involving the C/MPDCs and the RPRAT was conducted on January 12-13, 2015. According to the regional office, revisions still need to be done by some LGUs because of some issues which include the absence of some RLAs in the validation workshops, or confusion with the guidelines (e.g. guidelines on projects less than PhP500,000). Final LPRAPs were requested on March 5, 2015.

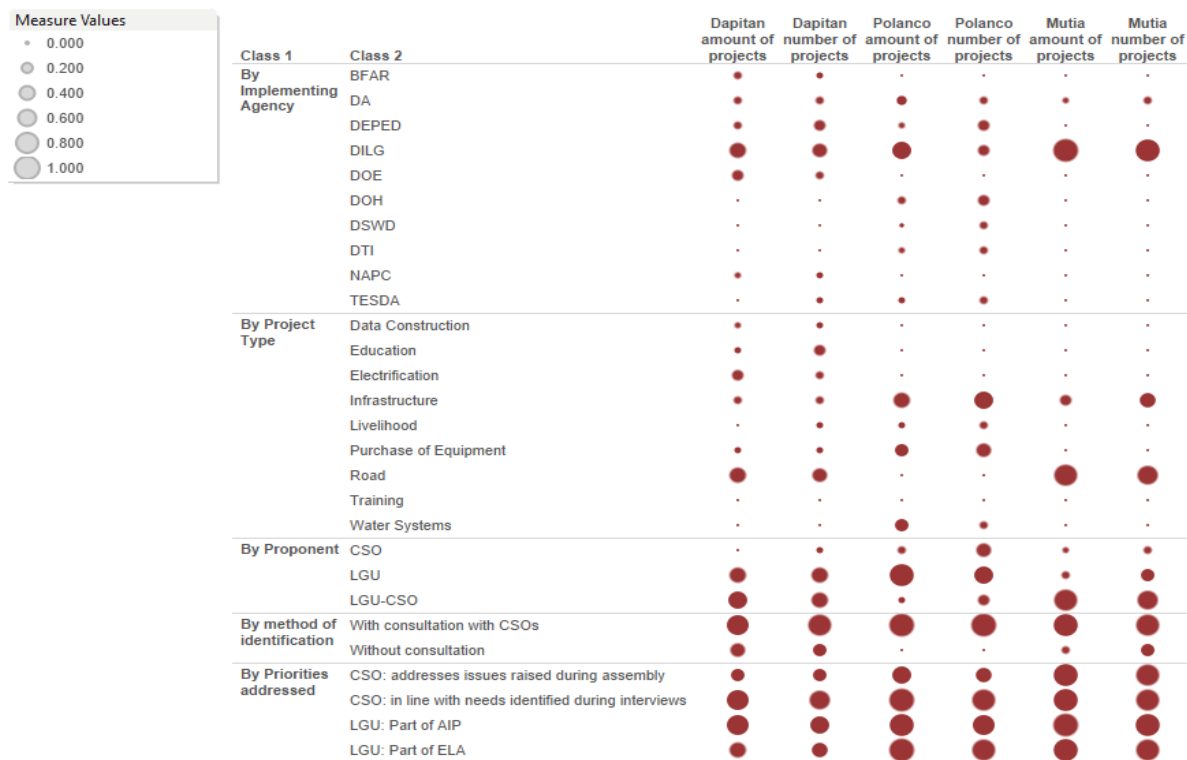
Mutia, however, is a different case. Unlike in Dapitan and Polanco, the projects discussed during the LPRAP workshop were the same projects (and same budget allocations) initially submitted to the region. In January 2015, the MPDO was informed that some of the proposed projects need to be replaced. For instance, the construction of the Barangay Health Centers and the Livelihood Program had some problems with the regional line agencies. For the construction of the Barangay Health Centers, the proposed beneficiaries did not comply with DOH’s requirement of 5,000 beneficiaries. As for the livelihood program, the MPDO stated that there are permits to be secured from DA before the project is approved. Accomplishing the requirements needed would mean that the municipality would miss the deadline of submission

of the LPRAP. Thus, the municipality once again convened the LPRAT to discuss the revisions on January 26, 2015. It was agreed during the 2nd LPRAP Workshop that the funds will be realigned to the roads. A total of 2 million was added into the previously identified barangays of Newland, Diland, and San Miguel. Although there were manifestations from the CSOs that the livelihood programs are important, the Mayor reiterated that such projects will be included in the 20% development fund of the municipality.

Quality of Projects in the LPRAP

Table 9 summarizes the LPRAP of the three municipalities under study. It summarizes the BUB projects by implementing agency, project type, proponent, method of identification and priorities address.

Table 9. LPRAP FY2016



In terms of project preference, there is a long standing belief that LGU has a bias towards infrastructure projects while CSOs prefer livelihood programs. As shown in **Table 8**, most projects are being requested from the DILG. This is most evident in the case of Mutia. When looking at the type of projects included in the LPRAP, all LGUs have allocated large funds for

projects related to infrastructure, especially road construction. Although the interviews with CSO and LGU respondents (both in the municipality and barangay level) acknowledge the importance of livelihood programs, livelihood projects only account for a small portion of the BUB funds. Also, almost always, livelihood projects are lumped into one project. Key LGU officials cited that in practice, livelihood programs are either not effective or does not even materialize in the first place, especially when CSO are involved in the preparation stage. As for infrastructure projects, both CSO and LGU representatives conceded to the need to develop infrastructure in the municipality. The preference on infrastructure stems from the LGUs frustration over band-aid solution. In the past, they put gravel on the earth roads in the barangays for it to become passable. However, during the rainy seasons, the gravels are washed away by the rains and flood. At the end of the day, the problem has not been solved. Thus concreting of roads is seen as a long-term, permanent solution to the infrastructure woes of the LGU. In addition, we can also look at the preference on infrastructure on the source of funding. Most LGU representatives argue that livelihood projects need not to be funded by the BUB since it can be funded in the LGU's local development fund. On the other hand, in no way can the 20% LDF of a small municipality be able to fund such big projects. The preference on infrastructure for BUB funding will not be problematic only if other projects identified during the CSO assembly and LPRAP workshops that are not funded be included in the LGU's development plans.

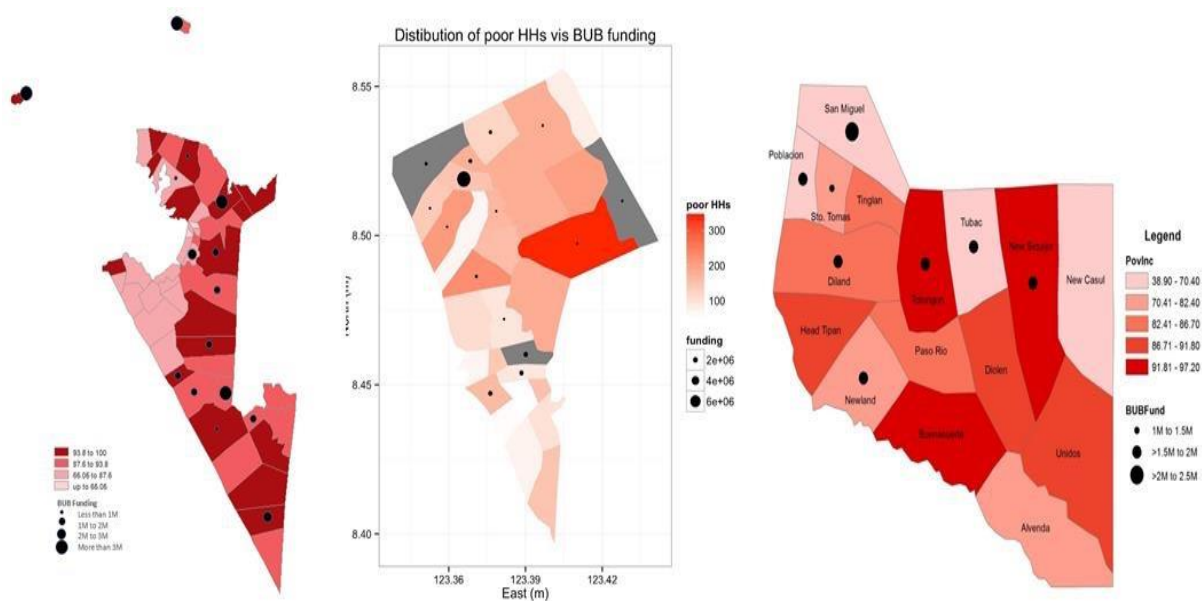
In terms of project proponents, projects are usually either jointly proposed or LGU proposed, especially in Dapitan and Mutia. Looking closely however, it should be noted that all projects identified during the assembly have been included in the LPRAP in both municipalities. And thus, it can be said that projects perceived by CSOs as needed in the municipality are similar to the LGU's. Note, however, that in the case of Polanco, a significantly larger percentage of projects is LGU-identified. This may probably be due to the fact that CSO assembly output was not presented during the LPRAP workshop, and that discussions were made jointly by CSO and LGU representatives. There is a high chance that CSOs had been dominated in the municipality. But what is more worrisome is the inclusion of projects without consultation at least with the CSO members in the LPRAT. This means that changes in the projects finalized during the LPRAP workshop were done by LGU members after the event. This is especially the case in Dapitan, where two big projects were included without approval of the CSO members. Despite the fact that the signatories need to sign the LPRAPs prior to submission, changes in the documents they need to sign are no longer explained to them.

In general, most projects are able to address the needs of the localities as perceived by both the CSOs and the LGU. However, giving closer attention to the CSOs' needs, it can be noted that while identified projects are able to address needs specified during the interviews, it does not fully address the issues identified by the CSOs during the assembly. This is somehow dubious as

the PSA is intended to guide participants in project identification. With this, there is a need to develop a mechanism where data presented by the MPDC be connected with the PSA workshop that will be conducted during the assembly and LPRAP workshop, and also to the process of project identification and prioritization.

Finally, quality of projects can be seen as to how it is targeted towards underserved and poor areas. **Figure 7** maps how the BUB budget was allocated in the three municipalities.

Figure 7. Project Beneficiaries, FY 2016 LPRAP



Projects identified during this round of BUB in Dapitan City are generally well-targeted, i.e. 16 of the 17 identified barangay beneficiaries have poverty incidences higher than the city average. This is with exception to Barangay Banonong, an urban barangay, who was only identified during this year's cycle. Compared to the previous rounds, beneficiaries are better-targeted in the FY2016 BUB. 10 of the 17 (60%) non-poor⁶ barangays have been identified as beneficiary at least once during the first two cycles, while 5 of the poor barangays have received projects only during this round's BUB.

⁶ Barangays with poverty incidence higher than City poverty incidence are considered poor

In Polanco, immediately apparent is how most of the funding goes to the *poblacion*. Further, 7 out of the 13 (54%) identified barangay beneficiaries are non-poor⁵, 3 of which have multiple projects not just in 2016 but also in the previous years. One of the poor barangay beneficiaries in FY2016 has received a project only during the FY2016 cycle. Unlike in the case of Dapitan, the BUB is more targeted in the previous years than this year's cycle. Specifically, 12 of the 16 poor barangays have been identified at least once in the past two cycles.

Similar to Dapitan is Mutia. Projects identified during this round of BUB were generally well-targeted, i.e. 5 of the 8 identified beneficiaries are poor. It may be important to note that similar to Polanco, the poblacion, a non-poor barangay, have multiple projects not only in this year's cycle but also in the previous years. Poverty targeting in this year's cycle is almost similar with the previous rounds, where 6 of the 8 identified beneficiaries are poor.

Looking at the inclusiveness of the BUB in all the three rounds, it can be said to have benefitted the whole municipality regardless of poverty situation. However, some poor barangays have never been identified as beneficiary in any of the three rounds while some non-poor barangays have been identified more than once.

To explain further, 42 of the 50 barangays (84%) in Dapitan City have been identified as beneficiary at least once in the three rounds. However, while some 28 barangays have been identified as beneficiary more than once in the three rounds, some are yet to be identified. 8 of the 50 barangays have not once been named beneficiary of a BUB project, 2 of which are extremely poor⁷, namely Barangays Daro and Potol.

On the other hand, 24 of the 27 barangays (89%) in Polanco were listed as beneficiary at least once in the past three years. All non-poor barangays have already been identified as beneficiary, while three severely poor barangays have never been identified, namely Barangays Dangi, Linabo, and Maligaya.

Finally, BUB coverage in Mutia is less compared to Dapitan and Polanco. Only 11 out of 16 barangays have been identified as beneficiary. Four of the five barangays which are yet to be identified as beneficiary have poverty incidence significantly higher than the municipal average. These barangays include Barangays Alvenda, Tinglan and Unidos.

Sub-Project Implementation and Monitoring

JMC 5 provides that funding of both NGA and LGU-implemented GPB projects in a city or municipal government shall only be released if the LGU: 1. Pass the good financial

⁷ Poverty incidence of Barangay Daro is 96.3% while that of Barangay Potol is 91.8%.

housekeeping component of the Seal of Good Local Governance; 2. Substantial accomplishment in the implementation of the PFM Improvement Plan as determined by DBM; 3. Has included the required GPB counterpart in their Annual budget; and 4. Has submitted proper financial and physical accomplishment reports to the concerned NGAs for BUB projects in the previous years. In a memo issued on January 25, 2015 on the compliance status of LGUs, Dapitan City, Polanco and Mutia conformed to the Full Disclosure Policy and has a no adverse COA report, which are requirements for the attainment of Good Financial Housekeeping. Further, it has complied with the PFM Improvement Program requirements.

Status of implementation of FY2014 Projects

While the interest on the BUB process is concentrated on project identification and planning, sub-project implementation is equally important because it influences CSO trust and participation in subsequent BUB planning cycles. **Table 10** provides an overview of the status of the 2014 sub-project implementation.

Table 10. Status of the 2014 Sub-Project Implementation

	Dapitan	Polanco	Mutia
TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS	12	10	6
Completed	1	1	0
On-going	3	1	2
Pipelined	2	3	2
Validation on-going	0	0	0
Reprogrammed	0	2	1
No feedback	2	3	1
Discontinued	4	0	0

Of the 15 projects identified by the LPRAT in Dapitan City, only 12 were approved for implementation in 2014. 1 project, specifically the pre- and post-harvest equipment acquisition was initially not approved because it was removed from the menu. This, however, was recently approved and included for implementation in 2015. Of the 12 projects for implementation in 2014, only the skills training provided by TESDA has been completed, while 3 (25%) are on-going. 4 projects (33%) were discontinued for various reasons:

- Bamboo Development Project, which was initially included in the list of projects under DENR, was dropped from the menu upon validation. A letter has been sent by the CPDC to the Regional DENR to replace the project to “Co-management Arrangement of Coastal mangrove and Upland Forest Resource”.

- Another project under DENR, the National Greening Program, has also been discontinued. Budget proposed was only 800,000, but due to clerical errors, RPRAT file reflects 8,000,000. Further, it has been discontinued because the LGU failed to comply with DENR's eligibility requirement of having 50ha of contiguous area. This, according to the respondents, have not been specified in the menu of projects. Checking on the existing menu of projects (JMC 5 Annex D), it only specifies that land eligible for development should have an area above 50ha, still without mentioning that it should be contiguous. Despite attempts by the LGU to realign the funds to a different project, the DENR decided to transfer the project to a different municipality.
- Finally, two projects to be implemented by DOT, namely Baylimango Cave Spelunking and Rizal Adventure Tourism projects have been discontinued, the former being a private property and the latter being a protected area.

Finally, no information has been received by the LGU regarding the implementation of the 2 DA projects (17%), namely Fry Bank Center and Food Processing Center.

In Polanco, almost all projects proposed for FY2014 are yet to be implemented. As of March, only 1 project had been implemented, 1 on-going, and the rest still for implementation or validation. During the LPRAP workshop for the FY2016 cycle in Polanco, the MPDC raised the motion for replacing FY2014 projects that were disallowed. These include the (i) change from construction to expansion of carpentry house and (ii) changing the construction of two business centers into one business center and one kabuhayan center. The LPRAT approved this motion. The issue is on the ownership of the approving body to the revised projects. The options would be to either seek approval of the current LPRAT or to reconstitute the LPRAT of the concerned planning cycle. An operational monitoring committee consisting of the concerned previous LPRAT members would have given the option of reconstituting that year's LPRAT to amend their projects.

In terms of the sub-project implementation of the FY 2014 in Mutia, three project funds have been downloaded to the municipality while only 1 project is currently on-going. The rehabilitation of the farm-to-market road in Pasorio and New Land is at 80% completion, based on the interview with the MPDO. The MPDO also stated that tranches of projects from DAR and DILG have been downloaded. There was also a replacement of project in FY 2014. Originally, DAR was supposed to fund a Php 5-million bridge construction under the "Tulay ng Pangulo" program. However, this was discontinued and was replaced with a road construction project instead.

Status of implementation of FY2015 Projects

None of the projects for implementation in 2015 has been started as of the time of the interviews. The implementation of the projects is dependent on the 2014 sub-project implementation. Once the funds from the previous fiscal year are properly liquidated, the 2015 project implementation can commence. Nevertheless, projects have already been finalized and have been reflected in NEP2015 as of July 17, 2014. Further, the LGU stated that they have been in communication with RLAs regarding the status of the 2015 projects. Changes from the LPRAP submitted by the LGUs are presented in **Table 11**.

Table 11. Updates on FY2015 Projects

	Dapitan	Polanco	Mutia
Total number of projects in final LPRAP	12	16	7
unchanged	5	14	5
Change in budget	7	1	1
increase	3		
decrease	4	1	1
change in project		1	1
new			
dropped			1
revised		1	

Common to all are the budgetary adjustments needed as a result of a memorandum issued by the DBM to decrease budgetary allocation of all LGUs for FY2015. This is caused by: 1. increased LGU coverage of the BUB, and 2. other flagship projects and regular projects funded by the implementing agencies. The DBM/implementing agency either decreases amount of money allotted for certain projects according to its budgetary requirements, or returns the projects to the LGU to replace project or adjust budget accordingly. These changes were no longer relayed to CSO representatives in the LPRAT.

One of the most recent updates that Mutia received is the possible amendment to the proposed National Greening Program under DENR. They have been informed that Mutia will be ineligible to receive the Php 500,000 fund because they failed to meet the 50 hectares of contiguous area. As of the interview, the MPDC stated that it is still uncertain whether the project will be replaced or dropped completely.

NGA Feedback and Information Sharing

Performance of the implementing agencies in terms of information sharing, being facilitative and being consultative during the 2014 sub-project implementation vary across LGUs. Specifically, in Dapitan City, TESDA has been identified as the one who fared best because it monitors the status of implementation and regularly visit the field sites. Thus it is not surprising that it is the only project that has been fully implemented in Dapitan City. At the other end of the spectrum, problems have been encountered with DOT because of lack of physical presence in study sites. Similarly, the LGU also experienced problems with DA, where the sectoral heads need to go to DA to follow up on the projects because of lack of updates. As of the date of the interviews, the LGU has not received updates from the DA as to the status of the release of funds, or if the projects will be implemented at all for the two DA projects that are due for implementation.

On the other hand, NGAs were rated highly in Polanco regarding feedback on progress of implementation. Their LGU counterparts do not have any complaint on providing feedback and updates. However, DepEd and DOH were cited as difficult to coordinate with. Even at the orientation stage, both lacked high level representation to present their menu of programs and to clarify status of projects for implementation. A common complaint on both agencies is the lack of feedback on status of projects, even those slated for FY2014 implementation.

In Mutia, positive remarks have been given to DAR and DILG in terms of coordination, information sharing and fund releases. Positive feedback has also been given for DA. However, they are experiencing delay in the release of funds recently. Conversely, DOH and DENR were cited as ill-performing because of the lack of update. Further, some respondents from the LGU argue that communication is usually one way, and that unless the LGU makes an effort to follow up directly to these agencies, no information will be provided to them.

Generally, a common complaint on DepEd and DOH is the lack of feedback on status of projects, even those slated for FY2014 implementation. The regional DILG official in charge of BUB clarified that implementation of construction projects under DepEd and DOH is to be undertaken by DPWH. However, LGU officials are not aware of such arrangements, and as such, do not know the proper offices to follow-up on the implementation status. This also highlights the need for better inter-agency coordination. If inter-agency communication was well arranged, the proper focal person could have been referred to planning officers following up on the status of projects.

In addition to problems encountered during the implementation phase, the problem also lies in the lack of clarity and changes in guidelines and menu of a number of implementing agencies that results in non-approval of proposed BUB sub-projects. Moreover, some requirements for certain projects are not fully laid down for consideration in project identification, like in the case of the National Greening Program where land area requirements need to be contiguous.

On top of that, no representatives from the RPRAT were present during LPRAP workshop. And in no way do the information presented during the LPRAT workshop is enough to avoid technicalities and errors. What makes matters worse is the fact that some projects were approved during validation at the RPRAT level but were be discontinued at the time of implementation. While some agencies allow for realignment, some do not resulting in forgone funds on the side of the LGU.

Project Monitoring

In line with transparency of sub-project implementation, the COA requires LGUs to monitor BUB projects as part of its Full Disclosure Policy. According to DILG representatives, Php 15,000 per municipality is intended for posting status of implementation of LGU projects. Compliance of LGUs, however, is low. Further, there is no standard as to who should be monitoring the sub-project implementation at the LGU level.

Monitoring of projects at the LGU level in Dapitan City is on a per implementing agency basis. Specifically, projects under DOT and TESDA are being monitored by the CPDO, DA project by the City agriculturist, and DILG projects by the City-DILG (headed by the CLGOO) and City Engineer. While individual projects are being monitored, no single body is assigned to consolidate status of all BUB project. Hence, if LCE or other interested parties were to consult regarding the status of implementation of BUB projects, one should go to the department assigned for each specific project. While the CLGOO claims that the city has an existing project monitoring committee, it has not been activated for the purpose of the BUB.

In Polanco, no actual operational monitoring scheme had been observed or presented as of the interview period. At least during the interview, the research team had the perception that the MPDC keeps tracks of any updates in the BUB. Interviewed LGU officers stated their planned monitoring system. The MPDC proposed an inter-LGU monitoring system that will expose them to best practices in other localities. Another of his proposal is the constitution of an inspectorate team with provisions for travel allowance.

In terms of monitoring of projects in Mutia, the LGU has a Municipal Project Monitoring Committee. This body is in-charge of the monitoring of all the projects of the LGU, not just of the BUB. This is headed by the Municipal Mayor, and includes the MPDC, the Municipal Engineer, the MLGOO and 3 accredited CSO representatives. For RLAs, monitoring is more on the financial accomplishment and releases of funds.

In terms of monitoring at the national level, a centralized website (OpenBUB.gov.ph) is being put up to provide access to data on projects and programs implemented by LGUs across the country. Information on implementation of projects, which include project status, location, implementing agency and budget will be freely accessed. To date, status of 2013 and 2014 sub-

project implementation can be accessed in the website. However, how updated/reliable the information contained in the database are is still questionable. At the time of writing, 1st and 2nd quarter reporting have already been submitted. However, online information do not seem to match with the status of implementation gathered by the team. One of the reason might be the site is still currently being set-up and may not yet be fully functional.

Although CSOs were given role in project identification, they have a reduced role in project implementation. Information sharing is limited to implementing line agencies and sectoral heads of the LGU, and is no longer extended to include the CSOs, except in the case of Mutia, for example, where a few CSOs were included in the Municipal Project Monitoring Committee. One of the reasons why no information is being shared with the CSOs, or why it is difficult for CSOs to gather updates from the LGU, is because no single monitoring body for BUB projects is in place. While the status of the projects was presented during the CSO assembly, CSOs were not able to remember this part of the assembly. This may be due to the fact that the information shared during the assembly was not comprehensive, or the CSOs' interest is centered on project identification and not so much on implementation.

Current improvements in the implementation and monitoring mechanism include the creation of a core group per municipality/ city tasked to look into BUB affairs, with special focus on project implementation and monitoring. In January 2015, community mobilizers in the Zamboanga Peninsula region have already started mobilizing a core group which will consist of 6 to 8 CSOs, most of which are part of the current LPRAT, while some will be part of specific sectors like the faith-based organizations. Unlike the LPRAT, composition of the core group will not change annually but will be expanded to include a few CSO reps from each year's LPRAT. This can be considered as one of the most important developments in sub-project implementation and monitoring that has been introduced by the DILG.

General assessment

Usefulness of the BUB

The Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Program is desirable because of the additional funds it provides. On the side of the local government, the GPB is desirable because it unloads the 20% development fund of the LGU. In addition to the provision of projects that are deemed important to the citizens, the city has additional funds to finance projects which are in line with its priorities. However, the importance of such program goes beyond this. In general, the GPB process increases transparency in governance. Also, it pacifies the clamor of barangays and the general public for accountability of funds since everyone is now part of the process of identifying and proposing the projects. For the barangay chairpersons, it also serves as a

tangible political accomplishment due to the fact that their barangays were thoroughly informed and consulted.

Usual planning and budgeting process prior to the GPB can be characterized as a “black box” where information is only limited to a small number of individuals. While the CSOs are already involved in policy planning through their membership in the Local Development Council, the difference lies in the fact that planning is more detached in the LDC. Further, some CSOs claim that CSO membership in the LDC is purely for compliance’s sake only. While ideally, CSOs can identify projects to be funded by the 20% LDF, according to some representatives, this does not happen in reality. In contrast, the role of CSOs in project identification is fully established in the BUB process. Further, CSO representation in the LRPAT is 50%, compared to just 25% in the LDC. Hence, issue of being outnumbered in votations can be ruled out.

Further, through the BUB, people in the society have become more involved, thus improving policy making by ensuring that the more vulnerable and marginalized population has a voice on projects that will be included in the budgets of national agencies. For this reason, most respondents still prefer going through the BUB process despite the tedious social preparations that it entails, instead of treating the fund as an additional IRA or as a block grant. If, however, a block grant be provided instead, it should be treated like a trust fund where it is earmarked for projects identified through the usual process of the BUB.

Joint Memorandum Circular No. 5

As in the previous rounds, one of the main causes of delay in the BUB planning cycle is the late release of the JMC 5. While the JMC 5 have shown significant improvements since the previous versions, some parts are still unclear, explaining differences in the conduct of the BUB. Furthermore, while some of the things that happened in the 3 LGUs seemed acceptable based on the guidelines laid forward by the JMC, some revisions/refinements might still be useful. **Table 12** summarizes differences in the conduct of the BUB in the three municipalities as well as a number of deviations from the letters of the JMC No. 5.

In terms of the menu of programs, most respondents acknowledge the need for a list that participants can choose from and can guide them in identifying project that are geared towards poverty alleviation. However, most respondents think that the menu is limiting and does not capture what is really needed in the locality. To some, having a menu is contradictory to the spirit of participatory planning, since the end results are limited by impositions from the top. Suggestions to allow the inclusion of some projects outside the menu in special cases were raised.

Table 12. Deviations to the Letters of the JMC No. 5

JMC/Guidelines		Depitan	Polanco	Mutia	IMPLICATION	
CSO Assembly						
Invitation						
	Selection of Invitees	invitees should be based on the CSO map	LGU requested for the list prior to the release of the invitations. LGU selected CSOs to be invited to the assembly	Some CSOs were not given invitation while some CSOs were added by the LGOO	No glaring deviation as LGU based their invitation solely on the CSO map.	Political interference might be present in CSO selection
	Sending out of invitations	2 weeks prior to the event	invitations were sent out 2 weeks before but were only received a week before the event	released 2 weeks before to messengers, not to CSO representatives	-	
	Public Posting		no contact details of person/office provided	no contact details	LGU claims that there were public postings but CSOs state that they did not notice any public invitation to the CSO assembly.	this insinuates that attendance is on a per invitation basis only
Election						
	Selection of LPRAT representatives	elected officials, immediate relatives and LGU employees are ineligible	JMC does not prohibit former officials to participate. Former vice mayor politically allied with the mayor was allowed to attend and become an LPRAT member		LPRAT members (on the LGU representatives) include elected officials. SB Chair on Appropriations was not a member of LPRAT as JMC stipulates. However, the SB Chair on Infrastructure, SB Chair on Finance, SB Member-ABC President was in the LPRAT. The SB Secretary was also a member.	political alliance with the mayor and domination in discussion pose a threat in the process
	Selection of Signatory	signatory must be: 1. pantawid parent leader, rep from basic sector and a CSO rep who is a member of the LDC	former vice mayor which is a representative of the business sector was selected as signatory and co-chair. Business sector is not a basic sector		-	
Conduct of PSA						
					Not all barangays have conducted Barangay Assemblies by the time of the CSO assembly. This meant not all barangays have their PSAs and list of projects. Although PSA was conducted during the assembly, the municipality used the PSA from the previous year as the final list for projects.	

	JMC Guidelines	Depitan	Polanco	Mutia	IMPLICATION
LPRAP workshop					
	Sending out of invitations	2 weeks prior the event		less than 2 weeks	less than 2 weeks
	Conduct of PSA	LPRAT composed of equal number of CSO and LGU reps shall construct the LPRAP	not all LGU representatives were present. Some LGU employees not part of LPRAT were allowed to participate and vote	Some non-LPRAT LGU reps were allowed to participate; No apparent use of the output of the assembly	Although PSA was conducted during the workshop, what was used was the LGU list of projects as identified by the MDC.
	Project identification				The Municipal Mayor lobbied for the prioritization of large infrastructure projects that cannot be funded by the LGU's IRA or the 20% development fund. There is a preference for infrastructure projects over livelihood projects.
	LPRAP Submission	List of projects endorsed by the LPRAT should be submitted to the RPRAT	some projects discussed and finalized during workshop were changed/dropped/replaced without consultation	CSO representatives state that changes in the budget of the projects were not clear to them.	political intervention
Post-event					
	Satisfaction Survey		no appreciation of the use of the satisfaction survey	no appreciation of the use of the satisfaction survey	no appreciation of the use of the satisfaction survey
Other					
	LPRAT as committee of the LDC	LPRAT should be institutionalized as a committee of the LDC	role of LPRAT is contained in the BUB process	role of LPRAT is contained in the BUB process	role of LPRAT is contained in the BUB process; the EMDC was not convened.

Also related to the menu of projects, some respondent consider the year on year changes in the menu of projects, and requirements for each project. Further, and probably more importantly, there seems to be a lack of clarity in the requirements of some projects in the menu. There is a need for line agencies to construct a menu of projects with clear guidelines and requirements which respondents can consider in selecting their projects.

Other refinements in the guidelines are needed. Specifically, not all are informed of what is expected from them in every step of the process. Invitations should include agenda of the assembly/workshop and needed preparations. Also, it might be useful to provide organizations the overview of the process, i.e. provide a flowchart including expected deliverables/outputs from each step of the process. This is so they will have an idea of what is expected from them and be able consult with their own sectors on what problems and projects they will identify during assembly. It is important to understand that while planning is bottom-up, it is equally significant to make them understand and appreciate the bigger picture first before they can be effective players in the planning and implementation process.

Facilitation: Community Mobilizers, NAPC Focal Person and BUB Secretariat

One of the main features of this round's BUB process is the clearer tasks assigned to the Community Mobilizers (previously called Local Facilitator). Although it has been noted by some respondents that they cannot attribute the improvements in the BUB process to the employment of the community mobilizers since variances in facilitative ability may be a result of differences in persons hired for the position, it cannot be discounted that the modifications in the scope of tasks of the community mobilizer may have contributed to the relatively smooth conduct of the 2015 planning cycle at least for the localities under study.

First, it is evident that community mobilizers are more visible than the local facilitators. This can be attributed to decreased coverage of each community mobilizers. Specifically, during the previous round, only one local facilitator was assigned to Zamboanga del Norte Province, which consists of twenty seven municipalities. In this year's BUB cycle, three community mobilizers are assigned to the province, each handling eight to nine municipalities. In addition to the limited coverage of community mobilizers, responsibilities of each are extensively laid down, which include mandatory involvement in all BUB-related events in their area of coverage, i.e. facilitation in CSO assembly, and support during the LPRAT orientation and LPRAP workshop.

Second, in addition to their increased visibility and role in BUB events, there are also given additional tasks which were not included or were not clearly specified during the previous rounds. These include (1) mapping and profiling of CSOs in the areas assigned to them; (2) consolidation of projects for FY2016 and monitoring of projects for FY 2013-2015 as may be applicable in their areas; and (3) administering satisfaction surveys after both the CSO assembly and LPRAP workshop. It should be noted, however, that community mobilizers are not provided with mobilization funds separate from their contract prices that they can use in CSO mapping, community mobilizing, project monitoring and other CSO-empowering activities. Hence, there is no need for community mobilizers to go beyond the minimum expectation. Although this was not the case in Zamboanga del Norte, it could be a problem in other provinces. Besides, even if CMs do not mind having out-of-pocket expenses now, this is not sustainable in the long run.

Contracts of the community mobilizers have been extended even after the FY2016 planning cycle to continue CSO profiling and mapping, to monitor sub-project implementation, and to strengthen and empower CSOs in the locality. Community mobilizers assigned to Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur must be commended for some efforts they have undertaken that are already beyond their responsibilities. Such include the sending of the list of projects to CSO reps in the LPRAT (which the LGUs failed to do), information dissemination via word of mouth to CSOs, providing constant reminder to LCE on the conduct of LPRAT quarterly meeting, and conducting monthly meeting of CSO members in the LPRAT. These, however, are self-initiated. Success of BUB process in certain localities can be partly attributed to these initiatives,

and without institutionalizing these efforts, same level of success might not be achieved in other localities. There is a need for the BUB-PMO to capture some of the best practices and incorporate them in the guidelines.

According to the Regional DILG, there are still no guidelines that the current community mobilizers will be renewed for the next BUB planning cycle. The CMs however are free to reapply. There is a need to acknowledge the importance of continuity, even in hiring CMs. CMs should not be hired per planning cycle but should be on a per term basis. This is crucial because current CMs, through trainings and hands on experience, are more knowledgeable of the BUB process and current situations, including issues and problems, of the LGUs they handle. Instead of rehiring every planning cycle, CMs need to continuously be trained in community mobilizing and facilitating the BUB process. There should, however, be a mechanism for performance evaluation to ensure the quality of CMs being employed.

While the role of the Community Mobilizers were clear during this year's cycle, the role of the NAPC-focal person in the province was rather ambiguous. According to the CMs and DILG personnel, roles of NAPC-focal person are similar and should go hand-in-hand with the roles of the CM. Currently, the NAPC-focal person acts independently of the CM. Further, no significant role in the conduct of the BUB planning was given to the NAPC-focal person. According to the CM, the NAPC-focal person visits sites where there are on-going BUB projects. From an outsider's point of view, the presence of the NAPC focal personal is mainly to observe the process in a few municipalities in the province.

Although the presence of the CM helped significantly in the conduct of BUB in Dapitan City, the need for a functional secretariat at the side of the LGU that is closely involved in LPRAP formulation as well as BUB sub-project implementation should be realized. In the case of Dapitan City, the CPDC, who should be in-charge of BUB affairs, was not able to be fully-involved due to health reasons. Assigned personnel from the CPDO was not able to facilitate the process well. Same is true with the City DILG. Although there were efforts from the CLGOO to supervise the process despite his absence during the CSO assembly, a powerful persona that would facilitate the process during the event was needed. Issues regarding the CSOs not allowed to participate the event could have been avoided. The case is different in the case of Polanco and Mutia, where the MPDC was able to handle the conduct of the LPRAP workshop well. Moreover, they are well-knowledgeable of the status of implementation of BUB projects which sent out the impression that they have a hold of the program.

There is a need of the LGU to assign BUB-related tasks to somebody who has technical capability to hold the process together. Further to the involvement in the planning side, the secretariat should be able to consolidate status of implementation of all BUB projects. Note,

however, that secretariat should be neutral and should exhibit no political motivation. Function should only be facilitative and should not affect or influence participation and decision-making.

Political Interference

Dapitan City is considered as one of the most highly-politicized areas in the region. This has been acknowledged by most respondents, from the CSO-, LGU- and RLA-side. Some CSOs have expressed concerns on LGU-CSO affairs in the city. Particularly, some argue that CSOs have very minimal role in LGU affairs. On the one hand, some CSOs assume they are intentionally being excluded in LGU affairs, while some think that the LGU cherry-pick CSOs who would be invited to participate. The LGU, however, argues that the exclusion of some CSOs to participation is because they think not all can give meaningful contributions to discussion and will only cause distraction. A similar scenario can be said in Polanco, although of lesser magnitude. CSO which are usually affiliated with the incumbent LCE are able to participate in LGU affairs.

Barangay captains also expressed concerns on the extent of effect political colors have on project funding. In most cases, barangays not allied with the city government seek funding/projects from other sources such as the provincial government, if they are politically allied, and other national line agencies.

In terms of the BUB, some political interferences can be cited in various areas, degrees of which are varying. In Dapitan City, probable interference can be seen in the issue regarding the LCE requesting for the CSO map and choosing those who should be invited to the assembly. Further, the issue of blocking out CSOs from the actual assembly, although not fully established, was claimed to be politically-motivated.

The process of project identification in Dapitan and Mutia is acceptable in the manner that a separate CSO list that was initially constructed during the CSO assembly and was finalized during the LPRAP workshop, and an LGU list created during the workshop in the case of Dapitan, and the AIP projects in the case of Mutia. This way, CSOs had the opportunity to bring forward projects independent of inputs from and influence of LGU officials/employees. Issues of project significance and feasibility can be ruled about because a joint prioritization through open discussion during the workshop was present. While this process was ideal, the political background and alliance of the co-chair in Dapitan City is questionable. Despite political problems within the party, it cannot be discounted that the views of the co-chair as a former public servant, which may be in line with development goals of the LCE, may have greatly affected the CSO list. Despite responses from the CSOs that their selection of the former vice mayor as CSO co-chair to the LPRAT is because of their established trust on the former public servant, and although there are no rules governing their participation, it is more appropriate to

exclude oneself from getting involved in such exercise. This exemplifies the lack of appreciation of the goals of the BUB and grassroots participation.

The influence of the former vice mayor goes beyond representing the business sector in the assembly and being included in the LPRAT. Domination in discussion and project identification both during the assembly and workshop was evident. During the separate construction of CSO and LGU list of projects, she was steering the CSO group, and at the same time, consults and discusses with the LGU group. Although the presence of sector heads is intended to provide technical support to the CSOs, the profile of the co-chair makes the turn of events dubious. Projects, which the co-chair claims to have been requested from the office of the mayor and were included in both the CSO and LGU list serve as an illustration. Without the former vice mayor in the CSO group, requested projects will most probably not be included in the CSO list, and will have smaller chances to be included in the LPRAT. Thus, it can be said that the presence of the former vice mayor in a way sullies genuine grassroots participation.

In addition to the participation of a former public servant, political intervention is also demonstrated in the inclusion of projects not identified during assembly and workshop, and without approval or consultation with any of the CSOs. During interviews, the staff from the CPDO owned the inclusion of these projects and in no way involved the LCE. However, some respondents explained the business interests of the LCE on the island barangays. This, however, has not been fully established. Regardless, inclusion of projects without informing CSOs is questionable.

Conversely, in Mutia, although there was a separate CSO and LGU list before project prioritization, the presence and participation of the Mayor may have affected discussion and project selection, may it be intentional or not. Although the mayor did not fail to encourage the CSO representatives to speak up and join the discussion, CSO representatives might have been intimidated because of his mere presence. Also during the interviews, the mayor stated that although he listens to the suggestions and other proposed projects, he stressed the fact that it is the government officials that knows what is the overall status of the municipality in terms of development and the LGU's urgent needs. However, what is appreciated in Mutia is the fact that there was compromise between the CSO representatives and the LGU. That is to say, despite having convinced the CSOs to allow the inclusion of the Mayor's projects in the LPRAP, a number of CSO projects were said to be funded by the 20% LDF of the municipality.

Identification of beneficiaries, however, did not seem to be affected by political colors. In Dapitan, barangays which are not politically allied with the LCE were also identified as beneficiaries at least once in the three rounds. In fact, some barangays like Barangay Barcelona, which are not politically allied have received multiple BUB projects. Similarly in Mutia, although the LGU decided on which parts of the municipality shall be given projects, specifically road

concreting, the Municipal Mayor made no distinction in choosing the location of road concreting. In essence, it was a technical decision rather than a political one. Barangay Captains from different political party were also given projects.

It can be said that political interference is only evident in participation in the planning and does not provide proof that it is being used to reward political loyalty of barangays and organizations. Yet, it cannot be ignored that the citizens cannot differentiate BUB projects from LGU projects. So, it is also possible that local officials use BUB projects for their own political gains.

Increasing Coverage and Participation

Efforts of increasing CSO participation have been evident in this round of BUB. The inclusion of a CSO map is one of the most important features introduced this cycle. This, however, should be a continuous process. While the coverage of CSOs is larger during this round, more CSOs could be expected to participate if mapping is really to be continued. But to ensure continuity, mobilization funds should be provided to the CM. At present, no funds are allocated for CSO mapping, which would translate to lesser incentive for CMs to cover as much CSOs as possible. Additionally, despite the potential increase in participation as a result of the mapping, budget provided by the DILG for CSO assemblies can be regarded as limiting. Since budget is constant regardless of size of LGU and/or number of CSOs in the locality, it gives LGUs an excuse for not inviting all CSOs mapped.

While the CSO map was done by the CM, invitations were disseminated by the DILG and/or the staff of the LCE. Despite having a master list, some stakeholders have the power to cherry-pick CSOs to be invited to the assembly. The DILG, which should have no political affiliation, in most cases appear to be allied with the LGU in the attempt to maintain a harmonious relationship. There is then a need for a neutral body not attached or connected with the LGU to disseminate invitation. While the CM might be a good candidate for the job, scope of work might already be too much. A mechanism can also be adopted to ensure that all CSOs mapped be invited to the assembly. The openness of the assembly to CSOs not included in the map should also be improved. While the new JMC has improved guidelines on CSOs not mapped but wished to be invited, current procedures and practices either directly or indirectly prohibit the participation of “other” CSOs.

Regardless of the modality adopted, it is ideal to involve as many organizations as possible. However in reality, this is not the case due to limited resources. The challenge lies in involving the type of organizations that can very well represent majority of the people in the locality. In particular, the scope of organizations need to be considered. CSOs whose scope is city-wide should be prioritized over barangay-level CSOs especially when the enhanced process is

adopted. This is because it is assumed that barangay residents are already represented by BDC vice chairs. By treating barangay-level CSOs on par with city-wide CSOs, the issue is no longer overrepresentation of some sectors, but rather, overrepresentation of some barangays. This is especially the case when some barangays have not yet been mapped by the CM due to time and budgetary constraints.

Overrepresentation of sectors in the assembly should also be looked into. While the current structure of setting the sectoral composition in the LPRAT is effective in ruling out the possibility of sectoral control over the results of the LPRAP, it is still valuable to ensure that no sector is overrepresented during the assembly. The importance of federating comes in the picture. Currently, some organizations are already federated while some are not. This poses a problem in the conduct of assemblies because federated organizations only have one representative in the assembly while non-federated organizations have more than one representative. Quite notable is the overrepresentation of the Pantawid parent leaders and the SEA-K associations (SKA) during the assemblies.

In some areas where the enhanced process is adopted, it is the norm that Pantawid parent leaders be selected as BDC vice-chair, especially in the case when the BUB cycle has commenced preceding the conduct of the usual social preparation process of the KALAHI-CIDDS (i.e. barangay assemblies and PSA). Having said this, it is safe to say that having pantawid parent leaders and SKA representatives in the CSO assembly, in a way, makes the process similar to the enhanced process in the sense that barangays are embodied by these barangay-level association representatives. The only difference is, in the enhanced process, a representative from each barangay is ensured, in contrast with the current system where not all barangays have been mapped and invited. Using this argument, it is best to adopt the enhanced process as it has mechanisms to address issue of equal representation of barangays. Regardless of the modality used, participation of all barangay-level organizations, not only of parent leaders and SKA reps should be controlled to avoid spatial overrepresentation.

In addition to ensuring increased and genuine participation of the grassroots, improvement in the quality of participation is crucial. There is still a need to realize the importance of networking, organizing and providing orientation on the role of CSOs in community development. There is a need for CSOs to be capacitated through project development trainings. Such training should include the drafting of project briefs, as well as the provision of technical information which are vital in the implementation of projects for them to be able to make informed decisions in project identification and prioritization. In addition to project development trainings, advocacy on the part of the CSOs should be improved for them to be able to come up with better-quality projects. With all these, the government then needs to

invest more on CSO empowerment and implement programs which are intended for CSO development.

Finally, while CSOs are given power to identify and prioritize projects in the GPB process, they are almost completely dissociated in project implementation. They are not held accountable for any problems that may arise during implementation. CSO responsibility should not end in the planning process. Rather, they should have ownership of the projects they propose. Some key informants argue that the GPB should not be a dole out. CSOs should also be required to provide counterparts, which may not necessary be monetary in nature. This counterpart can be in the form of labor in project implementation and maintenance. This would not only improve service delivery but could also contribute to CSO empowerment.

Adoption of the Enhanced Process

Despite acknowledging the importance of greater CSO coverage in the BUB, the type of organizations that need to participate and that would embody the grassroots should also be understood. The adoption of the enhanced BUB process can make the exercise not only more targeted to the grassroots because it goes all the way down to the sitio level, but also more inclusive because of the participation of barangay chairmen and barangay representatives who are more knowledgeable of the needs in their areas. The involvement of the BDC vice-chairs plays an important role for checks and balances as they have no political identity. The involvement of community volunteers within the barangays increases transparency, and ultimately the CSO-LGU relations. However, the enhanced process should be adopted with caution and should ensure that (1) the LPRAT will be the one to come up with strategies to address issues identified during assembly and (2) the enhanced LDC be convened to approve the LPRAP. This is so the threat that the process will be politicized and the barangay officials will have control over BDC vice-chairs can be ruled out. Further, it is important that all barangay chairmen attend validation and approval of the LPRAP to ensure that no projects finalized during workshop be unduly replaced because of political colors.

However, the BUB modality adopted by the LGU also has implications on the type and beneficiaries of projects that will be included in the LPRAP. By involving the barangays in project identification, projects will most likely be focused on felt needs, resulting in short to medium-term public works projects which are not targeted to sustainable poverty reduction. Further, projects that will be proposed are barangay-level, and will most likely be provided to barangays of those in the LPRAT. This will be more rampant in the case where more barangay representatives participate.