



# EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP



## A Civil Society Organization and Local Government Unit **COORDINATION GUIDE**

**Effective Collaboration and Partnership**

A Civil Society Organization and Local Government Unit Coordination Guide

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>BDC</b>	Barangay Development Council
<b>BMFI</b>	Balay Mindanao Foundation Incorporated
<b>BARMM</b>	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
<b>CPP-NPA-NDF</b>	Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DILG</b>	Department of the Interior and Local Government
<b>DOLE</b>	Department of Labor and Employment
<b>DSWD</b>	Department of Social Welfare and Development
<b>EDSA</b>	Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FSTP</b>	Financial Support to Third Parties
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Government Organization
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>LGC</b>	Local Government Code
<b>LGU</b>	Local Government Unit
<b>MARADECA</b>	Maranao People Development Center Incorporated
<b>MNAO</b>	Municipal Nutrition Action Officer
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MSWDO</b>	Municipal Social Welfare Development Office
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>PDAF</b>	Priority Development Assistance Fund
<b>PIN</b>	People In Need
<b>PO</b>	People's Organization
<b>PPA</b>	Project Program Activities
<b>TDSP</b>	Teduray Day School Project

# Introduction and Purpose



**People in Need (PIN)** is an international non-government organization (NGO) based in Prague, Czech Republic that provides humanitarian and development assistance globally. It started its Philippine operations in 2013 serving communities affected by typhoon Yolanda. Throughout the years, PIN has developed projects that directly address the needs of Filipino communities. Currently, PIN has projects based on these pillars: **Civil Society and Inclusive Governance, Climate Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, and Response and Recovery**. One of the major outputs of its project; *Strengthening Capacities of Civil Society in Caraga and BARMM for Good Governance* is a CSO-LGU Coordination Guide on social accountability and policy dialogue.

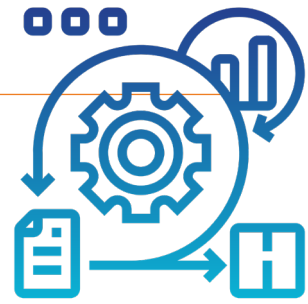
This Civil Society Organization (CSO) and Local Government Unit (LGU) Coordination Guide is a handbook developed and produced to serve as resource material for CSOs and their networks, LGUs at all levels, and other stakeholders involved in public accountability, policy, and good governance.

This Guide draws from the experiences and lessons learned in implementing the European Union-funded project *Strengthening Capacities of Civil Society Organizations in Caraga and BARMM for Good Governance*, which involved various CSOs across the Caraga and BARMM regions of Mindanao. It utilizes the results and findings from research and discussions with stakeholders on CSO-government partnership as a basis for the guide.

This guide also emphasizes the importance of the key elements in increasing CSO capacities in coordination efforts with its government counterparts, encouraging the sharing of responsibilities and functions in the areas of monitoring, ensuring accountability, and in identifying and filling gaps in bringing about improved delivery systems for the citizens. This guide also identified and addressed systemic barriers that hinder coordination and partnerships between CSOs and LGUs. Best practices, challenges and gaps were documented and utilized for the conclusions and recommendations part of this book.<sup>6</sup>

PIN anticipates that this Guide will be effectively applied and fulfill its intended purpose in our collective efforts to build systems that foster a vibrant civil society in the Philippines.

<sup>6</sup> Coordination is used in this paper connotes a variety of opportunities where CSOs and LGUs intersect and work together. Such may be in the process of accreditation, capacity building, consultations, and implementation of local plans or project plans of CSOs.



# Methodology

The research conducted to shape this Guide consists of a desk review of relevant project documents provided by People in Need, focusing on development initiatives in Mindanao. The most pertinent documents included narrative reports from sub-grants awarded to Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in the Caraga and BARMM regions of Mindanao. These reports detailed the organizational priorities pursued by CSOs and how they improved their institutional capabilities by applying skills acquired from training.

The research also analyzed sustained projects of CSOs collaborating with Local Government Units (LGU) on specific local advocacy issues.

Questionnaires (instruments) were designed to identify issues in partnerships and coordination related to the implemented projects. The research included Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to gather specific information and insights from project participants. Both KIIs and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were organized involving CSO representatives and LGU officials.

All KIIs and FGDs were meticulously documented. FGDs were conducted to collect information from civil society representatives, covering topics such as project activities, capacity assessments, and strengthening initiatives, as well as how these activities improved their ability to engage with the government.

KIIs, involved local government officials working directly with CSO partners. These interviews included questions aimed at identifying good practices and actionable steps. The questions were based on public policies related to accreditation, resource allocation, and participation in local special body processes, including planning and tracking LGU projects and programs.

Responses from the KIIs and FGDs were used as leads for drafting the CSO-LGU Coordination Guide. Effective actions were identified as best practices that could be replicated by other CSOs and LGUs working together in similar contexts or situations.

# Executive Summary



The CSO-LGU Coordination Guide developed by People in Need is a practical tool grounded in the experiences of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Local Government Units (LGUs) in the Philippines. It reflects lessons learned from collaborative efforts in project development and implementation, aiming to strengthen partnerships, enhance coordination, and promote good governance and accountability.

Drawing on comprehensive research conducted in 10 areas across the BARMM and Caraga regions, the guide identifies best practices, highlights gaps in implementation, and proposes solutions to overcome common barriers in CSO-LGU engagement. Research methods included desk reviews, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), ensuring participatory approaches that captured valuable insights from CSO leaders and LGU officers.

## Historical and Legal Context

In the Philippines, CSOs are recognized as entities dedicated to fostering civil society while actively engaging with the government—a movement that gained prominence in the 1980s. They played a pivotal role in addressing societal issues such as corruption, social justice, and gender inequality.

The Philippine Constitution emphasizes the role of CSOs in governance, and the Local Government Code (LGC)<sup>7</sup> of 1991 mandates LGUs to encourage CSOs as active partners. The BARMM Organic Law<sup>8</sup> further strengthens public participation in Mindanao's regional governance.

Additionally, the 2022 Guidebook for Civil Society Organizations<sup>9</sup> in Local Special Bodies and Local Budget Process, along with directives from various government departments, address the accreditation of CSOs within LGU systems. The LGC also requires LGUs to allocate resources, including funding, to accredited CSOs.

7 [https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1991/ra\\_7160\\_1991.html](https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1991/ra_7160_1991.html)

8 [https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2018/ra\\_11054\\_2018.html](https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2018/ra_11054_2018.html)

9 [region1.dilg.gov.ph/images/Transparency/BOOKS/TAP\\_R1\\_SLC\\_Guidebook FULLL.pdf](https://region1.dilg.gov.ph/images/Transparency/BOOKS/TAP_R1_SLC_Guidebook_FULLL.pdf)



## Strengthening CSO-LGU Partnerships

The guiding principles for effective CSO-LGU engagement are based on the experiences of CSOs and LGUs. These principles serve as a framework for evaluating collaborative options that contribute to shared goals. For successful implementation, a champion of CSO-LGU relations is needed to initiate and sustain the process. Participating CSOs and LGUs must assess their current strengths, capacities, interests, and resources, and work jointly to establish a solid foundation for collaboration. Ongoing relationship management, shared learning, and sustainability are essential components.

The guide identifies common CSO-LGU coordination mechanisms across various local government levels, all supported by public policy or local executive authority enabling CSO participation in governance. It concludes that understanding the values, resources, practices, capacities, and interests of CSOs and their communities is crucial for effective coordination.

## Building Trust and Capacity

The guide emphasizes the importance of trust and confidence in building strong relationships. Effective communication, accountability, and resource efficiency are essential. Regular refreshers on policies, programs, and issues are critical to improving CSO-LGU engagement and achieving shared goals. Community-based organizations, People's Organizations (POs), and associations can enhance their role in governance by formulating organizational plans, strengthening leadership, identifying potential partners, addressing resource needs, and coordinating with local governments on human rights concerns.

Philippine NGOs should engage in partnerships with POs, cooperatives, and associations to promote transparency and accountability in governance. They can support CSO registration and accreditation, provide technical and financial assistance, and adopt a human-rights-based approach to policy development.

## Role of International NGOs

International NGOs and institutions should offer capacity-building programs to improve CSO-LGU coordination, social accountability, and governance transparency. These programs should focus on leadership training, advocacy workshops, and creating safe spaces for dialogue. Expanding local organizations' networks, facilitating knowledge sharing, and developing locally relevant resources are also vital. Initial funding and technical support for project management should be prioritized.

This guide underscores the importance of CSO-LGU relations and the progress made in recognizing that citizens are indispensable partners in building systems that support civil societies. It offers a roadmap for strengthening collaboration, fostering trust, and ensuring sustainable development through effective partnerships.



# Context of CSO-LGU Cooperation and Coordination



Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the Philippines are non-profit, non-state associations dedicated to improving society and the human condition. Most CSOs are registered and documented, often partnering with Local Government Units (LGUs) and People's Organizations (POs).

The CSOs that provided insights for this guide were part of the *Strengthening Capacities of Civil Society in Caraga and BARMM for Good Governance* project. This group includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and POs.

POs are community-based groups representing the interests and needs of their members. Despite their significant role, they often operate with limited resources and organizational funds. They face disadvantages due to limited resources and educational backgrounds, which can hinder their ability to meet the proposal and reporting requirements necessary to access funding. However, long-term partnerships with grant-giving CSOs have led to significant improvements in their capacity to manage projects.

CSOs serve as intermediaries for foreign and local grant-giving agencies. Historically, they gained prominence in the 1970s and mid-1980s in response to political issues affecting the socio-economic well-being of Filipinos. They played a critical role in the national movement triggered by the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr., culminating in the EDSA People Power Revolution, which led to the ousting of then President Ferdinand Marcos Sr.

The democratic space created after 1986 allowed CSOs to flourish. In the 1990s, the government enacted the Local Government Code (LGC),

mandating people's participation in governance through local special bodies. By this time, donor support increased, strengthening partnerships between CSOs and POs, particularly in development projects and programs.

Today, CSOs address a wide range of development issues, including social justice, environmental concerns, and governance. POs have become increasingly aware of governance, transparency, and accountability.

While CSOs expect to champion good governance, scandals such as the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) or the Pork Barrel Fund has raised concerns about CSO credibility, resulting in stricter compliance requirements, and reduced government funding opportunities.

For instance, in the People in Need project in Mindanao, no POs received fund allocations through LGUs' Annual Investment Plans. LGU support is often limited to reimbursements for transportation, food, and the use of venues. The accreditation process, which certifies CSOs' capability to engage with LGUs in planning and implementing development programs, has become more rigorous, discouraging many CSOs from seeking formal recognition.

Armed conflict further complicates CSO-LGU cooperation. The Marawi Siege and ongoing clashes between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) disrupt development efforts in conflict-affected areas. Additionally, the enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (Republic Act No. 11479) has impacted the mobility and safety of CSOs operating in conflict-prone regions. Many CSOs in Caraga and BARMM have experienced insurgency-related incidents, leading to increased security measures that restrict access to these regions.

Other forms of conflict, such as Rido (family feuds), further disrupt development initiatives. Socio-cultural practices like Maratabat among the Maranao influence how CSOs approach sensitive issues such as gender-based violence. Geographic challenges and limited funding also restrict CSO participation in remote areas.

Despite these challenges, CSOs have shown resilience. By leveraging community support and adopting creative, strategic approaches, they continue to navigate socio-economic, political, and security obstacles, making meaningful contributions to governance, transparency, and development in underserved areas.

# LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

## CSO Participation in Governance



The participation of CSOs in governance is shaped by historical and legal factors, reflecting the evolution of government policies and legislation in the Philippines. This journey can be traced back to significant political events in the Philippines, such as the turbulence in the 1970s and the ensuing clamor for reform. The EDSA People Power Revolution marked a turning point, not only in leadership but also in the legal framework that encouraged the growth of CSOs.

This shift laid the foundation for CSOs to emerge as leaders in government reforms, taking advantage of policy changes that promoted an enabling environment for CSOs and LGUs to collaborate in a meaningful and sustainable way across various sectors of development.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution is the pillar of CSO participation, recognizing that sovereignty resides in the people, who exercise their power through collective action in CSOs. All government authority emanates from the people, and CSOs serve as vital connectors between the public and the government.

### Notable provisions include:

- **Article II, Section 23**, states that the State shall respect the role of independent POs and to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means.
- **Article XIII, Section 15**, which requires the creation of mechanisms for consultation with POs.
- **Article XIII, Section 16**, mandates government to ensure that people effectively and reasonably participate at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making.

- **Article IV**, ensures democratic freedoms of speech, expression, the press, and the rights to organize and associate freely.

The Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991 further strengthens CSO participation in local governance. Section 34 directs LGUs to promote the establishment and operation of people's and non-government organizations, encouraging them to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy. Additional legal provisions include:

- **Section 35**, which allows LGUs to enter joint ventures and other cooperative arrangements with POs and NGOs for local development.
- **Section 36**, which enables LGUs, through its local chief executive and with the concurrence of the sanggunian to provide assistance, financial or otherwise, to such people's and non-governmental organizations for economic, socially oriented, environmental, or cultural projects

In recent years, government efforts to formalize CSO participations included the DILG Guidebook for Civil Society Organizations in Local Special Bodies and Local Budget Process in 2022 as well as Department Orders from agencies such as the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Department of Agriculture regarding the accreditation of organizations.

The DILG Memorandum Circular 2021-012 institutionalized CSO desks in all LGUs and promoted the establishment of People's Councils, although compliance only remains limited to only a few LGUs. Existing personnel are often tapped to perform these duties in an acting capacity.

LGU procurement policies also require NGO observers in the Bids and Awards Committee under Section 13 of the revised implementing rules of RA 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act, enhancing transparency and social accountability.

The legal framework also allows accredited CSOs to receive financial and technical support, including training and access to resources, contributing to successful implementation of local development projects and initiatives.

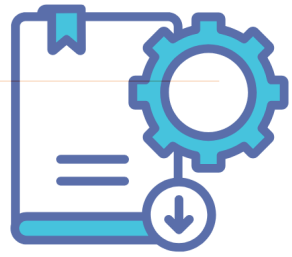
The BARRM Organic Law reinforces these policies, mandating full disclosure of public offices' income, expenditures, bids, and public offerings to promote social accountability. Section 40 specifically requires LGUs

to practice full transparency in their budget processes and involve CSO representatives in key decision-making activities.

Various other statutes, such as the Indigenous People's Rights Act, Magna Charta for Women, Magna Charta for Disabled Persons, and Expanded Senior Citizens Act, further support the right to participation and representation, ensuring transparency and accountability in governance. A key Constitutional policy related to women in development is found in Article XIII, which recognizes the role of women in governance and guarantees their full and direct participation in governance and development processes, ensuring equal benefits for all.

In terms of resource mobilization, the Revised Corporation Code, Cooperative Development Authority charter, Internal Revenue Code, and the Micro Finance NGOs Act provide the legal basis for CSOs to sustain operations independently. Certified CSOs, accredited by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification under Executive Order No. 720, are eligible to, further supporting their mission.

Finally, both CSOs and LGU must stay informed about the public policies that enable CSOs participation in governance. While these policies are responsive to current needs, they should be continuously examined, and amendments made where necessary, to adapt to the evolving challenges and opportunities in governance and development.

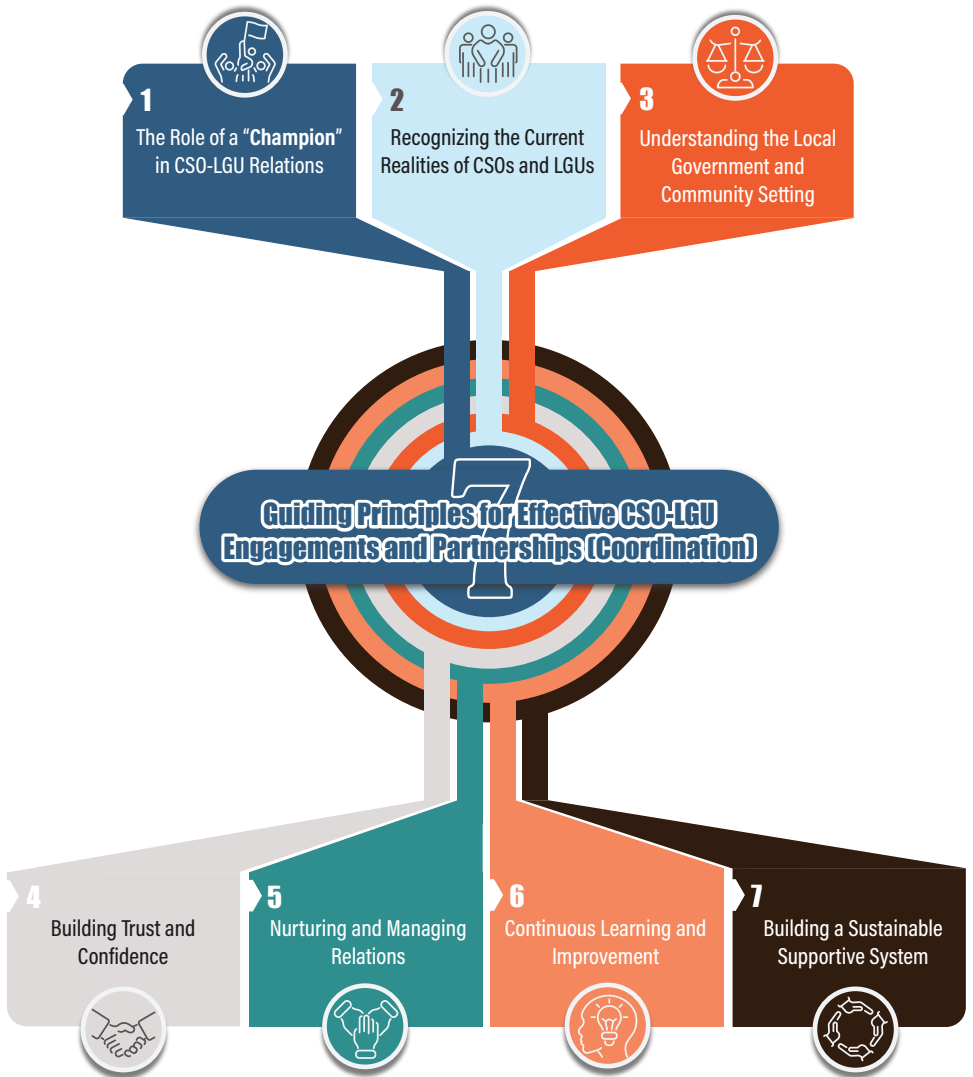


# Guiding Principles for Effective CSO-LGU Engagements and Partnerships

The principles and reminders outlined in this guide are derived from the experiences of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Local Government Units (LGUs) in fostering participation, social accountability, and governance. These principles aim to help CSOs, LGUs at all levels, and international organizations promote successful coordination between these groups.

By providing a consistent framework, these guiding principles enable CSOs and LGUs to evaluate options and select those that align with and contribute to shared goals. Common principles foster cohesion, encouraging effective collaboration despite differences in capacities, resources, and contributions. These insights were gathered through experiences in accreditation processes, participation in CSO conferences, stakeholder forums, local special bodies, and interviews with LGU officials.





## Summary of Guiding Principles for CSO LGU Engagements

### A. The Role of a “Champion” for CSO-LGU Relations

In every locality—barangay, town, city, or provincial—building CSO-LGU relations requires a “champion.” This individual acts as a proponent and initiator to sustain the process of strengthening partnerships. Successful initiatives thrive when established CSOs work with receptive, open-minded LGUs, ensuring productive coordination.

### B. Recognizing the Current Realities of CSOs and LGUs

#### 1. Capacity Gaps

Recognize the capacities that need improvement or strengthening. Many POs have untapped potential to engage with LGUs and advocate effectively. While some face challenges with management, governance, and technical skills, these can be strengthened through continuous support and capacity-building. Established and well organized NGOs can assist other organizations through coaching and sharing of best practices and management strategies.

#### 2. Impartiality and Neutrality

Eliminating factionalism, favoritism, partisanship that can limit the participation of various sectors and CSOs in governance. It is important for LGUs and NGOs to recognize and understand the challenges and capacity gaps faced by many POs and some LGU officials to avoid any prejudice or discrimination that could hinder relationship-building.

#### 3. CSO-LGU engagements are human rights-based

Approaching any issues as a human rights concern reduces political biases putting the problem first on agenda rather than personalities. This ensures that CSO-LGU coordination is focused on promoting, protecting, and realizing human rights.

#### 4. Capacity Strengthening

Acknowledging that CSO must learn and be empowered. Many POs bring unique insights from their communities and sectors. However, they can further strengthen their knowledge and skills by engaging with LGUs and other organizations. CSOs can invest in skills development of leaders and managers

who can further empower their organizations to effectively represent and advocate for their communities. Resources for capacity strengthening must be provided from local government allocations mandated in the Local Government Code, section 362.

### **5. Informing LGUs of Local Civil Society - Including emerging social and community networks and activities**

LGUs who have adequate knowledge and appreciation of local CSOs can better relate with CSOs and their rights and needs. Knowledge of CSOs in the community aids conflict prevention, transparency and accountability.

## **C. Understanding the Local Government and Community Setting**

### **1. Analyze and be an expert on specific and general issues that needs CSO-LGU actions.**

With a human rights lens/perspective, advocates of social accountability, participation in governance, and local development from CSOs and the LGU must study the issue or problem of concern is and how, what, and why this is happening. Advocates must have a deeper understanding of the issues they pursue as civil society or government.

### **2. Participation in the Executive-Legislative Agenda**

At the start of each three-year term, CSOs should engage as part of local special bodies or participate in formulating the executive and legislative agenda.

### **3. Study policies and procedures of engagements (with the intent to comply, apply/implement)**

Both CSOs and LGUs should understand relevant policies and identify opportunities within existing LGU programs to solve community issues.

### **4. Study local government Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs)**

Collaboration often occurs in LGU PPAs, where CSOs can participate in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating initiatives.

## **D. Building Trust and Confidence**

### **1. Fostering Transparency**

Importance of respecting and promoting transparency and disclosure to build trust and foster reconciliation. It is particularly crucial in areas where local People's Organizations (POs) face mistrust due to concerns about peace and order or suspicions of ties with groups labeled as terrorists.

- CSOs must communicate openly with local government officials, clearly

presenting their development agenda, whether on broad or specific issues and expressing a commitment to cooperate in resolving concerns with the government.

- LGUs should maintain open lines of communication, actively listening to the legitimate concerns and demands raised by CSOs.

## **2. *Recognizing the Value of CSO-LGU cooperation***

Effective coordination between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Local Government Units (LGUs) requires mutual understanding. Government officials must acknowledge that civil society plays a crucial role in voicing demands and may be critical of government actions and decisions.

Civil society must also recognize that government officials often approach these engagements with caution, especially when dealing with criticism.

## **3. *Resource Sharing and Resourcefulness***

Transparency and creativity are key to maximizing available resources. Be transparent about the resources each party can contribute. Broaden perspectives on resource access by identifying potential sources beyond traditional funding, ensuring resources align with shared goals.

## **4. *Awareness of Risks, Disruptors, and Opportunities***

Proponents of CSO-LGU coordination must anticipate potential challenges. Monitor risks, such as changes in local leadership, particularly during elections. A change in administration may shift the LGU's support toward new organizations. Foster tolerance by creating a conflict-resolution group to address differences or disruptions that could undermine shared plans or unity.

## **E. *Nurturing and Managing Relations***

### **1. *Develop a Social Contract or Agreement***

Every meeting or dialogue should result in agreements that serve as stepping stones for further coordination. These agreements can evolve into formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for long-term or tactical collaboration.

### **2. *Align and Integrate Plans***

Once CSOs and LGUs establish shared goals and objectives, they must align their respective plans. Joint planning ensures coherent collaboration and maximizes the impact of their efforts.

### **3. Establish a System of Partnership**

Develop a partnership framework that includes leadership roles, resource sharing, communication strategies, planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

- Set common targets that both CSOs and LGUs can work toward, focusing initially on achievable outcomes or areas of clear mutual interest (“low-hanging fruit”).
- Emphasize constructive engagement by fostering collaboration in areas where both parties can make immediate, tangible progress.

## **F. Continuous Co-Learning for Improvement and Trust Building**

### **1. Independent and Joint Progress Tracking**

All stakeholders must engage in regular, honest, and evidence-based reviews to assess whether planned results are being achieved on time. This fosters accountability and ensures timely adjustments to keep progress on track.

### **2. Sustained Communication Between CSOs and LGUs**

Continuous dialogue is essential to address minor or major deviations promptly, preventing small issues from escalating into larger problems. Regular check-ins help maintain alignment and momentum.

### **3. Evolve a Model of Social Accountability**

Both CSOs and LGUs should actively practice accountability by disclosing their performance relative to their roles and responsibilities. This includes adhering to government “Full Disclosure” policies and openly communicating results to the public, while listening to community feedback with openness and responsiveness.

### **4. Foster Innovative and Creative Thinking**

Encourage new, efficient ways of working together, such as allocating LGU resources for CSO capacity-building or developing training programs for community leaders. Innovation ensures adaptability and continuous improvement.

## **G. Building a Sustainable Supportive System**

### **1. CSOs supporting each other**

CSO networks are formed to provide strength and mutual support, uniting

POs in parallel with government structures at the barangay, municipal or city, and provincial levels. These networks ensure representation at every level of governance. Sectoral clustering, alliances, and federations are encouraged to enhance collaboration and collective advocacy. Additionally, NGOs can offer technical assistance to POs with limited resources, supporting their organizational development and capacity-building efforts.

## **2. Mobilize Local Champions**

Identify and engage influential leaders within both civil society and government. These champions can inspire action, advocate for community priorities, and lend credibility to CSO-LGU collaboration. Engaged government officials and politicians can champion CSO priorities, ensuring they remain on the public agenda.

## **3. Advocate for Enabling Policies**

CSO and LGU champions should work together to promote policies that sustain and expand collaborative success. For instance, an ordinance can guarantee consistent funding for CSO capacity strengthening, as outlined in Section 36 of the Local Government Code (LGC), which supports the development of internal organizational capabilities. Specific policies, such as the Barangay Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (BPMEC) Ordinance in the LGU of Loreto, further demonstrate how tailored regulations can enhance project oversight and promote effective governance.





# The First Step to CSO-LGU Engagements and Partnerships

**Department of the Interior and Local Government Memorandum Circular 2019-72 or Guidelines on Accreditation of Civil Society Organizations and Selection of Representatives to the Local Special Bodies** is a policy that effectively screens and determinets if a Civil Society Organization (CSO) is eligible to implement programs or projects using funds from a government agency.

As per policy, only accredited CSOs are allowed to access programs and projects and at the same time represent their sectors in the different local special bodies.

## **All CSOs shall comply with the following for accreditation:**

- » Letter of Application (Annex “A”);
- » Duly accomplished Application Form for Accreditation (Annex “B”);
- » Duly approved Board Resolution signifying intention for accreditation for the purpose of representation in the local special body;
- » Certificate of Registration or Certificate of Accreditation (or in the case of IPOs, certification issued by NCIP);
- » List of current Officers and Members;
- » Original Sworn Statement, issued by the chief executive officer or equivalent officer of the CSO, stating that the CSO is an independent, non-partisan organization and that it will retain its autonomy while pursuing

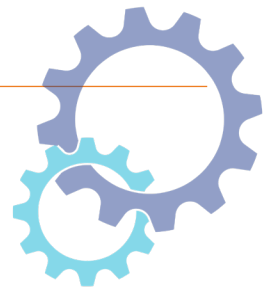
- the advancement of the peoples' interest through its membership in a local special body,
- » For existing CSOs, *Minutes of the Annual Meetings* of the immediately preceding year as certified by the organizations' board secretary;
  - » For existing CSOs, *Annual Accomplishment Report* for the immediately preceding year;
  - » For existing CSOs, *Financial Statement*, at the minimum, signed by the executive officers of the organization, also of the immediately preceding year, and indicating therein other information such as the source(s) of funds;

**A Certificate of Accreditation shall be conferred to a CSO based on the following parameters of evaluation:**

1. Registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Cooperative Development Authority, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Agriculture, Department of Agrarian Reform, National Housing Authority, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board or any national government agency that is empowered by law or policy to accredit or register such organization;
2. Organization purposes and objectives which include community organization and development, institution-building, local enterprise development, livelihood development, capacity-building, and similar development objectives and considerations;
3. Community-based and sectoral-based with project development and implementation track record of at least one (1) year;
4. Reliability as evidenced by the preparation of annual reports and conduct of annual meetings duly certified by the board secretary of organization; and
5. For CSOs applying to be members of the Local School or Health Boards, must be composed of individuals that have competencies that are related to the functions relevant to the local special body that the organization intends to be a member of.

*The accreditation is a continuous process wherein a CSO may apply and obtain accreditation at any time.*





# Local Government Social Accountability Mechanisms

**Social accountability mechanisms** are mandated by the Local Government Code and other statutes and may also be established at the discretion of the LGU. The mechanisms include councils, committees, and groups with diverse representatives from CSOs working within and with the government.

The following CSO-LGU coordination and social accountability mechanisms were present in LGUs in Caraga and BARMM. CSOs were actively involved as members or engaged as partners in the mechanisms. Each mechanism serves a particular purpose and shows the extent to which CSOs may engage and be part of governance.

All mechanisms identified in the table ensure that governance is participatory and inclusive, reflecting the needs and perspectives of various sectors and community groups. The creation of People's Councils, supported by a CSO desk, exemplifies the efforts to enhance CSO-LGU coordination and cooperation.



### Mechanism



### Description



### Administrative Level

(Barangay, Municipal, Province, Region)



### Sector or Topics of Application



Any Prerequisite Needed



Level of Expertise Needed



Intensity High Participation



### Local Special Bodies (LSB)

Local Special Bodies (LSBs), whether councils or committees, are mandated by the Local Government Code or created by Local Government Units (LGUs) as needed. LSBs bring together representatives from various government agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and sometimes private stakeholders, ensuring broad and inclusive participation in governance.

To ensure balanced representation, CSOs must make up at least one-fourth (¼) of the membership in any Local Special Body.

All levels  
At the regional level, there is a Regional Development Committee

Local Special Bodies (LSBs) mandated by the Local Government Code include:  
1. Local Development Council  
2. Local School Board  
3. Local Health Board  
4. Local Peace and Order Council (POC)  
5. Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC)  
LGUs may also establish other LSBs as needed, such as: Local Housing Board, Local Tourism Development Board, and Local Anti-Drug Abuse Council.

Accreditation by the the local legislative body (Sanggunian)

High

Expected to fully participate in discussions and decision-making



### People's Councils and CSO Desks

Established under the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) to promote participatory governance.

CSO Desk facilitates collaboration between LGUs and CSOs. People's Council provides a platform for accredited CSOs to engage in policy-making and program monitoring.

Municipal, City, Provincial levels

Recognition and providing for a mechanism of participation for CSOs in addition to accreditation and eligibility to represent in local special bodies

Minimum is to be recognized by the LGU.

Low to medium

As members of a People's Council CSOs need to constantly engage with local government counterparts. Members may participate as volunteers in LGU activities.



### Community Peace and Development Coalition (Lawig Kalinaw)

Incorporated in the People's Council. A new mechanism that focuses on ensuring that women and other vulnerable sectors are included in decision-making processes, resolving local conflicts, addressing grievances, and discussing priority community needs.

Barangay

Resolving conflicts and community issues, prioritization of community needs, and ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized sectors.

CSO member

Low to medium



## Mechanism



## Description



## Administrative Level

(Barangay, Municipal, Province, Region)



## Sector or Topics of Application



## Any Prerequisite Needed



## Level of Expertise Needed



## Intensity High Participation



### Municipal Nutrition (Action) Council

An LGU body linked to the municipal health office, primarily responsible for planning, coordinating, and monitoring nutrition programs. It is headed by the Municipal Nutrition Action Officer (MNAO) and supported by Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), who help implement nutrition initiatives at the community level.

Municipal

Nutrition and Health

Officially recognized by the LGU

Low to medium

Periodic meetings and activities, such as Operation Timbang (weighing children) and volunteering in various community initiatives.



### Barangay Development Council

Assist in setting the direction of economic and social development priorities and coordinates development initiatives. It is composed of barangay officials and accredited community organizations.

Barangay

Economic, social concerns, and community development

Registered organization officially accredited by the Barangay Council

Medium

Regular BDC meetings  
Barangay Development Planning  
Barangay activities implementing programs and projects of the LGU.



### Local Government Project Monitoring Teams

Committees established by the local government to monitor and evaluate specific projects within the LGU. Examples include the Barangay Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (BPMEC) in three municipalities of Agusan del Sur and the Mainit Municipal Evaluation Team of Surigao del Norte.

Municipal and City

All local development sectors<sup>4</sup>

Preferably accredited CSOs of the LGU. However, local chief executives may also invite NGOs and POs to participate.

Low

Activities are planned and engagement by CSO is timebound and as required.



## Mechanism



## Description



## Administrative Level (Barangay, Municipal, Province, Region)



## Sector or Topics of Application



## Any Prerequisite Needed



## Level of Expertise Needed



## Intensity High Participation



### Technical working groups (TWG)

Created to address specific policy issues or concerns related to LGU projects and programs. This body consists of experts and stakeholders, including CSOs. It collaborates with relevant LGU offices to provide technical support, conduct research, and offer recommendations.

All levels

All local development sectors  
Legislative and executive branches

Members are invited based on their expertise and experience relevant to the needs of the TWG.

Low to medium

Limited to a specific number of meetings and workshops.



### Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC)

The Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991 NGOs to be voting members of the Provincial/ City/ Municipal PBAC, a local body responsible for procurement in the all levels of the LGU. However, the Government Procurement Reform Act later changed the role of NGOs from voting members to observers. NGOs are now required to submit reports to the head of the procuring entity and other relevant offices.<sup>5</sup>

All levels

Procurement for all offices of LGUs at all local government levels.

Accredited NGOs.

High

Participation in the decision-making process of the PBAC for procurement activities.

When implemented as mandated and in alignment with the Constitution, social accountability mechanisms strengthen democratic processes, enabling the achievement of envisioned development outcomes through well-informed projects, programs, and activities that are owned and supported by the community.

<sup>4</sup> A Development Sector is a specific area of focus within the community that requires planning, resources, and action to achieve sustainable growth and improvement. The five sectors are; social, economic, infrastructure, environmental, peace and order)

<sup>5</sup> Aside from the LGC, there is also the Presidential Decree No. 1594 and Executive Orders No. 262 and 40 series of 2000 and 2001 respectively.

# CSO-LGU

## Cooperation in Addressing Malnutrition

### Purpose and Context

Child malnutrition, which affects one in three children in the Philippines, remains a critical public health problem, influenced by a variety of factors leading to conditions such as undernutrition (stunting and wasting), underweight, micronutrient and vitamin deficiencies, and over nutrition (overweight and obesity). Stunting and underweight are particularly prevalent among children in the Philippines.

Malnutrition can result in worse functioning of the immune system, increased severity and duration of, and susceptibility to, infectious diseases, delayed mental development, poor school performance and reduced intellectual capacity. In turn, this affects economic productivity at the national level.<sup>6</sup>

Common causes of malnutrition include poverty and food insecurity, inadequate

access to nutritious food and lack of knowledge about which foods are nutritious and which are not. Poor access to information and education on health and nutrition is a contributing factor to poor dietary practices. In remote, depressed and disaster-prone areas, there are likely to be periods when food is scarce, or people have limited dietary choices.

CSOs initiated advocacy on child malnutrition because of and based on the training they received from the NGO project.

In Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, the Lawanun Women's Producer Cooperative, in collaboration with the LGU, identified four severely malnourished children. Similarly, in Barangay Hinimbangan, Kitcharao, the Hiniusang Kababayan-an sa Barangay Hinimbangan reported one underweight child and one severely malnourished child. At the municipal level, The Kitcharao local government nutrition office recorded 53 undernourished children, five of whom were classified as severely underweight.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.who.int/data/nutrition/nlis/info/malnutrition-in-children>

Although the numbers may seem small, if left unaddressed, malnutrition can have long-lasting effects on both individuals and communities. Children who are malnourished are at greater risk of poor health and developmental delays, which also affects their performance in school. This may lead to reduced economic productivity and difficulties in earning a living in the future while being sick, would increase the personal burden of out-of-pocket expenses and the need for government to provide financial support for those in financial need. In addition, the incidence of malnutrition is an indicator of the level of food security and health and nutrition knowledge of the population, as well as of prevailing dietary practices. If left unattended or ignored, more children and families may be affected now and in the future.

There are many government policies and programs to prevent or treat child malnutrition. RA 11148 or the Kalusugan ng Mag-Nanay Act, which follows what is known as the First 1000 Days approach, organizes health and nutrition services for mothers and children from the time of pregnancy until the child is two years old. Nutritional support is provided to the mothers during pregnancy and lactation, as well as to the child. In many LGUs, such as Kitcharao and Lumbatan, nutrition action plans already include supplementary feeding for malnourished children and promote breastfeeding in accordance with the Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act and the Milk Code. These laws aim to improve nutrition and health outcomes, ensuring a healthier and more productive population. The problem, however, is the allocation of resources to ensure effective implementation by a local government,

as health and nutrition are not always prioritized. At the community level, dietary behavior and practices need to change from food choices to seeking nutritional advice.

The challenge faced by CSOs in Kitcharao and Lumbatan is to ensure government implementation of programs and behavioral change among families. The CSOs chose to advocate for a program addressing child malnutrition and collaborated with local government personnel and offices to advance this initiative.



Hiniusang Kababayan-an (HKBH) worked closely with their Barangay government, and directly with the barangay captain. HKBH was one of the two accredited organizations in the barangay. Most of its leaders were also active volunteers in the barangay government providing volunteer work at the barangay office and other community activities. In the past, HKBH received strong support from the barangay, which helped the

organization to have its own community bakery and provided transportation funds when they attended meetings outside of the barangay.

In terms of the proposed approach to work on the issue of child malnutrition, HKBH along with its barangay officials met with local government nutrition officials and raised this issue with them. The presence of the barangay captain with HKBH during the meeting with the municipal nutrition officials helped establish the partnership and navigate various political aspects and fostered cooperation in the process of community-wide coordination and collaboration.

Members of the Lawanun Women's Producers Cooperative were themselves Barangay Health Workers

(BHWs) and carried out the weighing of children in barangays called "Operation Timbang". They found that there were malnourished children, showing that there was a problem of child malnutrition in Lumbatan. With the data and testimonies from the BHWs, the Lawanun Women raised the issue with the local government, which caught the attention of the municipal mayor. The LGU eventually included the concern in its operational plan to reach six (6) barangays. The LGU also issued an ordinance on mandatory prenatal check-ups operationalizing a national policy to support the effort. The local officials, the Municipal Nutrition Action Officer (MNAO) and a councilor were assigned to work with the Lawanun Women together with the mayor's secretary who herself became active in the fight against malnutrition.

## How it worked?



In Hinimbangan, the number of malnourished children improved in 2024 compared to their status in 2023. The number of malnourished children in Kitcharao has decreased from 53 to 30 according to reports. The four (4) severely malnourished children in Lumbatan have all fully recovered according to the nutrition focus.

In Kitcharao, HKBH's efforts to strengthen its capacity for HKBH as a CSO and advocate were recognized and the current MNAO recommended HKBH to become a member of the Municipal Nutrition Committee, a broad alliance of local CSOs and LGU offices. HKBH is now actively involved in community activities during the celebration of Nutrition Month and Women's Month. The advocacy efforts of HKBH and another PIN's partner, the Poblacion Empowered Women's Association (PEWA), led to successful consultations in 11 barangays to discuss the child malnutrition and to develop Barangay Nutrition Action Plans. These plans are to be submitted by the barangays to the Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator for inclusion in the Annual Investment Plan.

At the barangay level, HKBH and the Barangay LGU (BLGU) worked together to provide nutritional support to malnourished children. The LGU has continued to provide supplementary feeding to 32 malnourished children. Monitoring activities were conducted with the Municipal Social Welfare Development Office (MSWDO) and MNAO of Kitcharao to identify and assist malnourished children.

In Lumbatan, the LGU prioritized addressing child malnutrition and worked with the Lawanun Women to cover six (6) barangays as the first service area. The LGU appreciates the initiative and support of the Lawanun Women who have been active in providing supplementary feeding and ensuring the immunization of children. The outreach to six barangays improved nutritional awareness by learning how to prepare nutritious food, understanding the effects of junk food, and how to lead a nutritious lifestyle despite economic difficulties.

Working together, the Lawanun Women and the LGU officials believe that the partnership has been successful. Based on Lawanun's recommendations, there are now plans to expand from six barangays to the 21 barangays of Lumbatan. To achieve this, it is suggested that communication between the CSO and LGU officials be improved and that joint planning be based on data collected directly from the barangays.

In both LGUs, CSOs and the local offices of the MNAO and other active officials were satisfied with the results of their partnership.



## Key Lessons Learned on CSO Engagement in Addressing Child Malnutrition:

### **Building Partnerships around Shared Values:**

Addressing child malnutrition in Kitcharao and Lumbatan highlighted the unifying effect of focusing on a basic human right—access to good nutrition. Through shared values, the HKBH, Lawanun Women, LGUs, and barangay leaders worked effectively to improve the nutritional status of children, establishing initial partnerships that was extended to several barangays.

### **Empowerment through Capacity Development:**

The NGO project significantly strengthened the capacity of CSOs to engage with local governments. The Lawanun Women identified and voiced concerns about malnutrition, used data to successfully advocate for government response, resource allocation, and the appointment of officials to address malnutrition issues.





### **Effective Advocacy through Persistent Engagement:**

CSOs such as HKBH and Lawanun Women persistently approached local governments, presenting evidence from their communities to demonstrate the severity of child malnutrition. In Kitcharao and Lumbatan, their data from Operation Timbang helped make malnutrition a priority for the local government.



### **Resource Sharing for Broader Impact:**

Despite limited financial resources, CSOs contributed human resources and collaborated with LGUs to support malnutrition awareness campaigns in additional barangays. Community volunteers enabled the program to quickly reach more barangays, leading to recommendations from the LGU to include HKBH in the municipal nutrition committee and expand CSO activities.



### **Local Governments Benefit from the Support of Grassroots Organizations:**

In areas where local governments are under-resourced or geographically isolated, grassroots organizations provide crucial volunteer support. In Lumbatan, the Lawanun Women worked alongside government initiatives, visiting communities to assess and address child malnutrition, demonstrating how community organizations can effectively support government programs.



### **Building Trust with Local Authorities:**

Both the HKBH and Lawanun Women have gained the trust of local governments by aligning their efforts with pressing local concerns and demonstrating shared commitment to addressing child malnutrition, thus fostering stronger, collaborative relationships.

These lessons emphasize the power of value driven collaborations between CSOs and local governments to effectively address a problem such as child malnutrition. They underscore how shared commitment, local engagement and strategic resource sharing can foster sustainable improvements in community health.



# Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations presented in this document are based on research, data, and insights gathered through interviews with CSOs and local government officials in the BARMM and Caraga regions.

Conclusions reflect the implementation of public policies related to CSO participation, the management practices of local governments in handling relationships with CSOs, the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms, and the participation of CSOs in local special bodies.

The recommendations were drawn from consistent patterns of success and areas for improvement. Through a detailed examination of both CSO and LGU experiences, we identified key factors that contributed to success, as well as instances where efforts fell short. This analysis highlighted important elements that could enhance coordination and strengthen relationships between LGUs and CSOs.

## The following are the conclusions:

- 1. Champions are essential** for establishing and maintaining effective coordination between CSOs and LGUs. It is important to have individuals or groups willing to take the lead and commit to fostering and sustaining positive relationships between these entities.
- 2. Effective coordination between CSOs and LGUs** hinges on a clear understanding of their respective partners. Familiarity with each other's values, perspectives, and shared priorities not only facilitates smoother collaboration but also strengthens alignment, paving the way for successful partnership outcomes.
- 3. It is essential to collectively identify and address trust issues** to foster effective coordination and build successful partnerships. Proactively surfacing and resolving trust concerns can mitigate potential risks and pave the way for stronger, more resilient collaboration.

Political differences can hinder CSOs' participation in governance, as some LGU officials may prioritize allied organizations that supported their election. It is essential to promote transparency, which can lead to aligned values, advocacy, and shared visions for development and change. This process involves recognizing strengths and accepting weaknesses, holding oneself accountable for commitments, and utilizing resources efficiently for the common good. Furthermore, effective communication and the development of strategies to address differences are crucial for leaders from both sectors to collaborate successfully.

4. **learning among CSOs about policies, programs, projects, and issues** is essential to realizing improvements in CSO-LGU engagements and increasing their effectiveness and efficiency in achieving goals and objectives. There is much to learn and discover together on various development issues and concerns to improve relationships as CSOs and LGUs.
5. **CSO and LGU relationships are affected by other stakeholders in the community.** The ability to create broader linkages and generate support is important to sustain engagements on local development initiatives and advocacy efforts. There are other CSOs within and outside of LGU who may be able to provide support and resources. There may be officials of the LGU and influential people in the community willing and able to mobilize their resources to provide support and help sustain CSO LGU coordination.

The following recommendations for **community-based organizations, POs, and associations** contribute to CSO-LGU strengthening. This will encourage greater involvement.

1. **Develop Organizational Capabilities**

POs must formulate plans to have a clear direction and framework for achieving goals and objectives. Strategic planning helps align resources and capacities towards in the long term. With plans, members and leaders of CSOs and LGU offices can work better together knowing their respective roles and responsibilities in local special bodies, People's Councils, and when working jointly on local government activities. A well-defined plan enhances organizational decision-making and transparent allocation of resources.

## **2. Expand Resource Access Beyond Funding**

Leaders can strengthen the core officers and groups of the organization by constantly building commitment to their common concerns and in addressing problems and issues faced by the organization and its members. Conduct regular meetings and update members of organizational affairs to practice transparency and build stronger unity and commitment.

## **3. Identify and Engage External Resources, non-government organizations, experts, supportive officials in the local government**

that can provide support on basic capacities like planning, handling meetings, managing activities, communicating, and dealing with specific organizational issues. Explore opportunities from barangays and municipalities, such as funding for seminars and training or local expert support for organizational capacity building.

## **4. Align on Organizational Priorities**

POs must agree on a set of priorities-based agenda. The organization must openly discuss and agree on why these are their priorities and objectives and check regularly if they remain relevant. Organizational priorities on the agenda represent demands or positions on local government concerns. For the organization, it helps maintain focus and agreement among members and cohesiveness in advocacy.

## **5. Practice resourcefulness**

POs can work with what they have. The absence of funds may limit what can be done but it cannot limit resourcefulness. Often, resources and support can be acquired through relationships with people and groups in the community. The use of community venues and donations from local supporters and government are common. In more advanced involvement, accredited POs remind LGUs of their obligation to assist CSOs.

## **6. Focus on current problems and issues**

Focus on human rights concerns and set aside possible differences in political beliefs and allegiances.

- » Study the issue and its context within the local government.
- » Identify what is happening, and how it happened, and find the root causes by asking why

- » Identify what rights are violated and what is not (You may identify what conventions are relevant to these rights)
- » Gather data to support claims
- » Know the stakeholders, who are the rights-holders and the duty-bearers
- » Coordinate and discuss ways forward with local government

## **7. Engage with Public Policies and Programs**

Inquire from your LGU about the programs relevant to your organization and sector supported by DILGs Memorandum Circular No. 2010-083 or the full disclosure policy. Seek clarification on policies about CSO participation in governance and social accountability mechanisms. Monitor existing PPAs and seek guidance from local government offices and barangay officials on matters related to your advocacies and concerns such as gender equality, malnutrition, and the creation of a people's council, etc.

## **8. Aim for registration and accreditation, and recognized by your LGU**

Consult your local municipal offices about requirements and processes for registration and accreditation. Furthermore, discuss the advantages, features, rights, and responsibilities of a registered, accredited, and recognized CSO. Request assistance to ensure full compliance with the required formats and standards for financial statements. Once completed make sure to comply with renewal and reporting requirements. Seek assistance when facing difficulties in complying with the CSO Desk or persons assigned from the LGU.

## **9. Build relationships and create network of CSOs and LGU officials**

In building and creating a network you are creating a support system. A PO's actions in building a network include meeting with other organizations in the community, talking with local experts and influential persons, communicating with your barangay officials and discussing community issues and concerns, reaching out to your elected officials, and seeking assistance from academic and religious institutions. Conduct inter-personal engagements, be transparent in your intentions and honor agreements in nurturing relationships. It is also important to practice tolerance of the weaknesses and possible differences. The intent is to strengthen relationships rather than create or worsen disagreements and conflict.

## 10. Champion CSO participation in governance and social accountability

If accredited and recognized POs can participate in local special bodies. During consultations, meetings, and dialogues within the local special bodies it is important to prepare and participate actively. Be aware of your rights as a member of the body and fulfill your role as a representative of your sector or NGO. In other local government activities or the People's Council, always be present and exercise your freedom to express the sentiments and concerns of your constituencies and membership. Actively ensure that everyone complies with rules and is accountable as a member of a government body.

The following recommendations are for **Philippine NGOs** or those operating directly in the Philippines engaged in and implementing projects with POs, cooperatives, and associations.

### 1. Facilitate CSO-LGU Engagements

NGOs may initiate or support initiatives leading to CSO-LGU engagements. With technical and financial resources, NGOs may lead or guide local CSOs and provide capacity-strengthening support. NGOs are equipped with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with local government offices and assist in building relations with POs.

### 2. Support Registration and Accreditation

NGOs can help community-based organizations register to operate within a province, city, or municipality and apply for accreditation in LGUs. Once recognized, NGOs can assist other CSOs and serve as a model on how to effectively participate in governance.

### 3. Maintain Credibility and Trust

NGOs play a crucial role in bridging community organizations and local governments. NGOs must consistently protect their credibility in order to maintain the relationship. NGOs can serve as models by demonstrating impartiality and tolerance, foster and maintain good relations with trust and confidence.

- 4. Provide Technical Support for Organizational Development** – NGOs through projects and partnerships can support POs and empower leaders through various organizational development activities. NGOs may facilitate the development of skills in human rights situation analysis, agenda setting, planning, advocacy, and communication skills, and in understanding policies and PPAs.
- 5. Link POs to Resources**

NGOs may provide or channel support from existing projects and donors or help POs access needed resources. NGOs may lead in negotiating or participating in local government special bodies to advocate for resources. Resources, aside from funds can be materials or logistical and other non-material resources such as experts and institutional assistance from academic institutions.
- 6. Promote a Human Rights-Based Approach**

NGOs must develop their expertise in using the human rights lens in approaching development issues and promote this to other civic actors and LGUs. Through training and capacity-strengthening programs, NGOs can empower communities to understand and claim their rights. NGOs monitor and report on realized and protected human rights and violations, holding governments accountable.
- 7. Assist with Research and Expert Guidance**

NGOs may extend support with their research capability or link experts to provide a better understanding of current issues and problems. POs engaging the government need to gain knowledge and understanding about local community issues and concerns to supplement their experiences.
- 8. Mentor CSOs in Governance Participation**

NGOs must be able to guide and mentor other CSOs and encourage LGUs to do the same for their effective participation in complying with requirements and responsibilities, planning, participation in implementation, monitoring, reporting, policymaking, and in adhering to agreements and procedures.
- 9. Support local network development**

NGOs can extend resources and technical assistance to other CSOs in the community in developing and operating local networks.

Strengthened local networks increase the voice, effectiveness, and sustainability of CSO-LGU relations.

#### 10. Develop Champions for CSOs

NGOs and assist in identifying and engaging champions who have been proven to support community initiatives and advocacy efforts. Meetings, workshops, and dialogues are crucial to building a strong relationship and developing champions. When there is an opportunity, champions may be exposed to best practices and models. Providing updated information and data helps articulate issues better.

#### 11. Support the development of policies to sustain CSO-LGU relations

These are policies such as executive and administrative orders or ordinances that adopt national policies or were crafted to address specific concerns in the locality. Ordinances may have a more permanent impact such as the required ordinance on a system of partnership under DILG Memo 2021-012. Appropriations ordinances for CSO concerns and inclusion in the annual investment plan are local budget policies.

### The recommendations:

The following recommendations are specifically directed for implementation to **offices directly responsible for CSO participation in governance** like the **Municipal/City Planning and Development Coordinator, Municipal/City Local Government Operations Office, and the Local Sanggunian or legislative council** and responsible executive and administrative offices.

Recommendations may be adopted by provincial local governments on providing technical and resource support at a broader scale for component cities and municipalities.

#### Recommendations for Barangays:

##### 1. Barangay councils should build community CSOs as partners in community development

Barangay officials and volunteers should learn and implement policies, programs and projects that could strengthen cooperation and collaboration with CSOs in the community.



**2. Identify barangay-based sectors and organizations**

Barangay officials should have an inventory of community organizations that focus on participation to governance.

**3. Support community-based organizations**

Support includes mentoring and guidance in organizational development. Organizations are provided with a space to conduct their affairs and may be provided with available funds.

**4. Strengthen the Barangay Development Council (BDC)**

Encourage and assist POs accreditation by the barangay council. The BDC led by the Punong Barangay is fully activated to mobilize people, formulate plans together with the barangay council, and monitor the implementation of programs and projects and other activities in the community.

**5. Enact barangay policies supporting cooperation and collaboration in the community**

Barangay ordinances are developed to address community issues with POs and constituents. Some ordinances and allocations will be needed to support the cooperation and collaboration of POs and the barangay council.

**Recommendations for city, municipal, and provincial local governments:****1. Design a CSO Participation Strategy**

Design in compliance with the numerous policies mandating CSO participation in governance and the mechanisms by government, such as the creation of Peoples Councils, LGUs design a general strategy with goals and outputs improving people's participation and partnership in governance through CSOs directly contributing to local sustainable development and ensures social accountability and transparency.

**2. Profile and Map CSOs**

Identifying CSOs requires coordination with CSOs, barangays, and offices at all levels of local government. A common profiling form may be developed to gather pertinent information including the capacities

and interests of CSOs to understand each organization better. CSOs must be classified and mapped according to different variables such as sector, location, membership, priority issues, activities, and projects.

### **3. Promote CSO-LGU Partnerships**

Communicate directly and often with CSOs providing clear information about the benefits and the advantages of CSO-LGU partnerships and participation in governance.

### **4. Establish a CSO desk and intensify technical support**

Comply with DILG Memo 2021-012 creating a position for a CSO Desk Officer. He/she will be responsible for all matters related to CSO's participation in governance. This position is recommended not as an additional job function, it is the main function of the CSO Desk Officer.

### **5. Facilitate CSO registration and accreditation**

LGUs must aim to encourage many CSOs in communities to coordinate and partner with the government. The CSO desk will be primarily responsible for assisting with CSO registration and accreditation. Problems such as poor compliance with accreditation requirements must be addressed by the CSO Desk and LGU offices.

### **6. Host Broad Stakeholder Gatherings**

The LGU invites CSOs to different types of gatherings such as meetings, consultations, dialogues on specific issues, conferences, and agenda-setting discussions. These gatherings aim to improve relationships as venues of expression and sharing of ideas views and positions on various local development issues.

### **7. Continuously educate and update CSOs about policies and PPAs**

Local seminars about relevant policies affecting the different sectors may be conducted on a regular basis in coordination with CSO groups/sectors. Seminars and dialogues about programs, projects, and activities of the LGU that are of specific interest to CSOs must also be conducted regularly or upon request.

### **8. Promote a rights-based approach to governance**

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals and ratified Conventions by the Republic of the Philippines, local government must popularize the human rights-based approach to governance. It aims

to urge parties to focus on issues affecting the people instead of political differences among people leading to mistrust or disinterest in local government affairs.

#### **9. Align CSO and LGU plans for local development**

Local governments initiate joint planning or discussion on local development plans with CSOs through the People's Councils, local special bodies, public hearings, and technical working group consultations. These activities aim to align the plans and efforts of CSOs and LGUs in addressing local problems and achieving shared goals.

#### **10. Allocate funds for CSO capacity strengthening and participation**

Local government complies with Section 36 of the local government code and when advantageous allocates funds for CSO strengthening and learning activities. Assist CSOs in budget related meetings in local special bodies. Allocations may also be entrusted to accredit CSOs by the local government to mobilize their participation in implementing and monitoring programs, projects, and activities.

#### **11. Create a People's Council with active committees**

The creation of the People's Council at the city, municipal, and provincial levels of government allow more CSOs to participate in governance. It is a mechanism that can harness CSO-LGU partnerships for local development. To enable active participation CSO members of the council can contribute as members of committees.

#### **12. Comply with ¼ representation in local special bodies**

All local special bodies comply with the minimum number of representations from CSOs. These CSOs sit as representatives in only one local special body to allow more CSOs represented in government. This can be achieved by encouraging more CSOs to be accredited.

#### **13. Encourage and mobilize CSOs in governance**

Aside from representation in local special bodies other members of a People's Council may be mobilized to participate in local

government activities. Members of CSOs may be engaged as volunteers in implementing and monitoring PPAs and community celebrations. Some CSOs whose concerns are elevated as policy issues may contribute to the development of local policies.

#### **14. Create mechanisms for maintaining good relations among all parties**

To manage differences and conflicts among CSOs and with LGU officials, a grievance and conciliation mechanism must be created to address possible conflicts that may affect CSO-LGU relations. A set of rules on handling grievances and steps towards fair adjudication and conciliation must be developed.

#### **15. Enact policies sustaining CSO-LGU partnerships**

Local policies like the required ordinance for a system of partnership are enacted. CSO-LGU policy teams or a committee may be created to attend to the policy requirements emanating from the operations of CSO-LGU partnerships and people's councils and to sustain and manage CSO participation in governance.

The following recommendations are provided for **international NGOs** and other institutions supportive of CSO-LGU coordination adding support to social accountability and transparency for good governance.

##### **1. Offer appropriately designed capacity-strengthening programs**

Strengthening capacity in basic organizational development, such as leadership and management training, will enable many community-based organizations to operate more effectively. Additionally, workshops focused on advocacy and communication skills will empower these organizations and boost their confidence in engaging with the government.

##### **2. Offer safe dialogue spaces to improve CSO participation in governance and LGU partnership development.**

These forums, meetings, and conferences serve as safe spaces where CSOs and LGUs can openly and freely discuss governance participation, away from the formal structures of local government.

### 3. **Broaden the reach and links of local organizations to various networks**

Support local CSOs in building connections and joining networks that can address their needs and enhance organizational effectiveness. These networks, whether national, sectoral, or international, are aligned with the interests and advocacy efforts of CSOs in the Philippines, providing valuable inspiration and models for growth.

### 4. **Organize knowledge-sharing opportunities**

This will foster deeper learning through direct interactions with other CSOs and individuals interested in governance, social accountability, transparency, and addressing specific development challenges.

### 5. **Develop locally appropriate knowledge products**

This can support their participation in governance and strengthen their advocacy efforts. Additionally, knowledge products can now be delivered in digital and interactive formats.

### 6. **Expand opportunities for funding of community-based organizations**

NGOs with established financial management systems can extend grants and other funding opportunities to CSOs. These NGOs can also offer guidance on developing proposals to articulate CSOs' needs effectively, while requiring operational support themselves. As conduits, NGOs may provide technical assistance to CSOs in project management, ensuring successful implementation and oversight.

### 7. **Support local research initiatives**

Support research on critical and shared issues, helping to articulate the concerns and rights of affected sectors and populations during engagements with the government. Behavioral research can help identify and address barriers to behavior change necessary for resolving social issues. Meanwhile, policy research can generate ideas for appropriate policy recommendations.

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# Annexes:

Annex "A"

~Sample Letter of Application~

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Vice Mayor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Presiding Officer, Sangguniang Bayan  
 Municipality of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Province of \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Vice Mayor \_\_\_\_\_:

In response to your Notice of Call for Accreditation, kindly be informed that \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of CSO) \_\_\_\_\_, with office address at \_\_\_\_\_, would like to seek for accreditation by that Sanggunian.

In support of this application are the following administrative requirements:

1. Duly accomplished Application Form for Accreditation;
2. Board Resolution;
3. Certificate of Registration issued by \_\_\_\_\_;
4. List of Current Officers and Members;
5. Original Sworn Statement stating that the CSO is an independent, non-partisan organization and that it will retain its autonomy while pursuing the advancement of the peoples' interest through its membership in a local special body, after satisfying all the requirements and set criteria, as stated in DILG Memorandum Circular No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_, and after securing a Certificate of Accreditation from the concerned Sanggunian;
6. CY \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Accomplishment Report;
7. CY \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Statement;
8. Profile indicating the purposes and objectives of our organization;
9. Copy of the Minutes of the CY \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting of the organization; and
10. For CSOs applying to be members of the Local School or Health Board: Photocopy of profiles of at least three (3) individuals in the organization that will verify their involvement in the health or education sector.

Very truly yours,

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Head of the Organization)

CY \_\_\_\_\_

Projects	Costs	Beneficiaries	Status

Project Financing (Sources or Schemes)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Services the Organization provides or can participate in

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Depending on your organization's technical area of expertise and scope of activity, which local special body are you most capable to be a member of?

- Local Development Council
- Local School Board
- Local Health Board
- Local Peace and Order Council

List of Members: (Use separate sheet)

- Within the LGU
- Outside of the LGU, if any

WE HEREBY CERTIFY to the correctness of the above information.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
President





Funded by  
the European Union



**People in Need (PIN)** is an international non-profit organization providing humanitarian and development assistance and has operated in over 40 countries worldwide since 1992. PIN began in the Philippines serving communities affected by Super Typhoon Yolanda in 2013. Ever since then, our actions in the Philippines have focused on sustainable livelihood, social cohesion, women and youth empowerment, renewable energy, health, disaster resilience, and good governance.



**Balay Mindanaw Foundation Inc. (BMFI)** is a Filipino Mindanao-based and Mindanao-focused non-stock, non-profit organization. BMFI's work and its people articulate a sense of fierce pride for Mindanao and a passion for transforming this poorest and most conflict-torn of the country's region into a "balay", a true home for its peoples – Christians, Muslims and Lumads, indigenous peoples of Mindanao.



MARADECA, Inc.

**Maranao People Development Center Inc. (MARADECA)** is a non-stock, non-profit service oriented institution catering to the needs of the Moro People in their quest for socio economic advancement and to struggle for peace and development. It adopts a people-based, community based, integrated and sustainable development framework that creatively reflects the aspirations of one Moro People.

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