

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the challenges on the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities of DSWD for sustainable development in the province of Sultan Kudarat. It utilized qualitative research design in gathering the data through interviews. Results revealed that the BLGU and DSWD encountered challenges in the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities such as insufficiency of CCAM funds allocation, limited allocated number of beneficiaries, lack of climate change awareness and not well maintained planted trees implemented by DSWD-CCAM program. The BLGU in coordination with DSWD addressed the such challenges through raising the number of beneficiaries, conduct information drive and re-planting of trees.

Keyword: - Climate change adaptation, Mitigation activities, and Sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

A major worldwide concern that threatens human livelihoods and the environment alike is climate change. Its negative effects, which include severe weather, sea level rise, and irregular precipitation patterns, have far-reaching effects, especially in vulnerable areas like the Philippines' Province of Sultan Kudarat.

Typhoons, floods, droughts, and erosion brought on by climate change are all common occurrences in the Sultan Kudarat province. The province's communities are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change because of their location and socioeconomic conditions, which worsen pre-existing poverty and problems with livelihood. In order to address the complicated consequences of climate change in response to this important concern, governmental institutions like the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) have started climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

The DSWD, a significant government agency in charge of social welfare and development, has implemented a number of programs in Sultan Kudarat aimed at reducing the effects of and adjusting to climate change. Among the strategies being employed in these projects include infrastructure development, capacity-building initiatives, improving community resilience, disaster risk reduction, and revenue diversification.

Understanding the effectiveness and importance of the DSWD's climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives in Sultan Kudarat is crucial for a number of reasons. These include assessing the program's efficacy in mitigating vulnerabilities that have been identified, its capacity to support livelihoods, its capacity to lower the risk of catastrophes, the challenges encountered during implementation, and the overall improvements in the well-being of beneficiaries.

For many years, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has been putting its adaptation and mitigation program into action. However, no studies have been conducted to critically assess the

program's effects on livelihoods and vulnerable communities in order to meaningfully contribute to the ongoing conversation about effective strategies for reducing the risk effect of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In order to fully comprehend the efficacy of the program, it is imperative that this study evaluate how the DSWD in Sultan Kudarat has implemented programs for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized quantitative methods. Qualitative design was employed to investigate the in-depth phenomena on the effectiveness of climate change adaptation and mitigation programs of DSWD for sustainable development.

The study was conducted in selected municipalities in the Province of Sultan Kudarat namely Bagumbayan, Columbio, Isulan, Lambayong, President Quirino, and Tacurong City. *Sultan Kudarat* is a province in the Philippines situated in the SOCCSKSARGEN region occupying the southern-central section of Mindanao. Located in Central Mindanao, Sultan Kudarat is bounded by the provinces of Cotabato and Maguindanao on the north, Davao del Sur on the east, Moro Gulf on the west, and South Cotabato on the south.

The primary respondents of the study were the Barangay Officials of the selected municipalities in the province of Sultan Kudarat who received, oversee and knowledgeable in the implementation, progress, outcomes, and impacts of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Program of the DSWD. Furthermore, all personnels from CCAM division of the DSWD also part of the study for monitoring the outcomes and progress of the implemented program.

A structured interview was made to the selected Barangay Captains and DSWD-CCAM head department that evaluated the challenges, impacts, strategies coping mechanisms employed to navigate the challenges that affect the implementation of the activities and projects. For the interview, the researcher assigned a recorder and transcribes during the conduct of the study and statement of the respondents written in the prepared questionnaire. The recorded data in the interview and written answer in the questionnaire were then transcribed in a verbatim manner and analyzed through theme to create a core of ideas concerning major challenges encountered by the DSWD personnel and the overall impact of challenges on sustainable development. Moreover, challenges faced by the Barangay Officials in the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities of the DSWD and their coping mechanisms they employed to navigate those challenges.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges and Barriers Faced by the DSWD for the Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Activities

The result of the study indicated the challenges and barriers faced by the DSWD in the implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation activities identified by the DSWD which are changing of political leaders, limited resources, capacity building, policy and institution frameworks, and selecting a non-qualified barangay for the project.

Changing of political leadership: The transition of political administration poses challenges, especially when there are changes in leadership and elections take place. Despite having well-established programs, whenever there is new leadership, particularly in the position of mayor, we are compelled to start anew and develop a fresh program. This challenge is particularly pronounced in provinces, where sometimes our greatest challenge arises when the province is reluctant to include the Local Government Unit (LGU). In such cases, our intervention involves coordinating with the Central Office to ensure that we receive proper guidance. It is imperative to have guidelines in place to ensure the inclusion of all LGUs under last-class municipalities.

Limited resources: One of the primary challenges faced by the DSWD is the limited financial funds for climate change program. These constraints hindered the implementation of comprehensive adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Policy and Institution Frameworks: The third challenges, inadequate policy and institutional frameworks from the BLGU for the project may impede the continuation of the project.

Capacity Building: Challenge were dealt in figuring out how to educate the beneficiaries in a way that they really get what the program's all about.

Inclusion of not qualified barangay and members for CCAM project: Beneficiaries are within family of Barangay Officials. It is a challenge, as the families of barangay officials are being chosen as beneficiaries instead of the vulnerable communities."

Challenges faced by the BLGU and communities in the implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation activities of DSWD

In this aspect, theme was generated in dealing with CCAM funds allocation, number of beneficiaries, lack of climate changes awareness and not well maintained planted trees due to heavy rain and flash floods for further presentations and discussions.

In table 1 presented the challenges faced by the BLGU and communities during the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities of the DSWD. The following topic generated from the responses of the informants.

CCAM funds allocations. The challenges are prevalent among barangays within the Province of Sultan Kudarat, particularly those receiving support through the (CCAM) program administered by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Barangay Local Government Units (BLGUs) encounter impediments when confronted with constrained funds from the DSWD, necessitating them to furnish cogent justifications to their constituents regarding the inability to accommodate all eligible individuals within the program. Additionally, the assistance rendered often proves inadequate in addressing the exigencies precipitated by climate change. Consequently, these circumstances have the potential to impede the effective implementation of the program.

Number of beneficiaries: Another prevalent challenge encountered by BLGUs pertains to the limited capacity to accommodate beneficiaries within the program, owing to the restricted allocation of funds. Moreover, discontent within certain communities arises from their exclusion from the program despite their membership in the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). Such circumstances fuel feelings of resentment among communities, attributing perceived favoritism to the BLGU in beneficiary selection processes.

Lack of climate change awareness. A notable challenge encountered in the execution of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation activities within BLGU-communities is the limited awareness among certain beneficiaries regarding climate change. These individuals exhibit a deficiency in understanding the concept and significance of climate change, leading to a lack of comprehension regarding the rationale behind pertinent activities. Moreover, beneficiaries with lower educational attainment levels are particularly affected, as they possess insufficient understanding of the program's objectives. Compounded by inadequate dissemination of program details and objectives, this dearth of knowledge among beneficiaries contributes to delays in program implementation.

The inadequate maintenance of planted trees: a key component of CCAM activities, presents a significant challenge for both barangay officials and communities. The mitigation strategy of tree planting, while integral to the program, is beset by challenges exacerbated by environmental factors such as heavy rainfall and flash floods, leading to the destruction of newly planted trees.

Table 1. Challenges in the Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Activities.

Global Theme	Basic Theme	Core Ideas
1. CCAM Funds Allocation	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited funds allocated from DSWD CCAM program ○ Inadequate amount of cash for works
2. Selection of Beneficiaries	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited number of Beneficiaries for cash for work program ○ Complaining of the some communities for not being part of the program.
3. Lack of Climate Change awareness	Typical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inadequate information campaign
4. Not well maintained planted trees implemented by CCAM program	Variant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Destruction of Planted trees due to flashflood and heavy rains.

Coping Mechanisms Employed by the BLGU to Navigate the Challenges

Based on the challenges faced by the BLGU/beneficiaries in the implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, some strategies and initiatives was shared by the BLGU to successfully implement the program.

Raising the number of the beneficiaries. To prevent misunderstandings and resentment within communities towards their fellow constituents and Barangay Officials, the latter have taken the initiative to make careful decisions. One such decision involved doubling the number of beneficiaries to ensure the inclusion of all eligible individuals on the list. As part of this strategy, the available funds were divided between two individuals, and job responsibilities were also distributed to ensure the inclusion of everyone in the assistance program.

Conduct information drive: The acquisition of knowledge among citizens regarding climate change stands as one of the most potent strategies in advancing the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) program on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Consequently, the Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) conducted an information dissemination campaign targeting all beneficiaries within their jurisdiction. This initiative aims to instill a sense of commitment among citizens to steward the environment and enhance the effectiveness of the program launched within their barangay.

Replanting of trees. Tree planting represents a mitigation activity within the spectrum of environmental initiatives. It stands as one of the most effective measures in flood prevention, given its capacity to mitigate the adverse impacts of heavy rainfall and flash floods. Moreover, it possesses the capability to contribute to the reduction of global warming by sequestering carbon dioxide (CO₂), consequently mitigating heat accumulation in the atmosphere. The Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) spearheaded a tree planting replacement campaign in response to areas affected by heavy rain and flash floods, thereby reinforcing their commitment to environmental sustainability.

Table 2. Addressing the challenges encountered during implementation of the Activities

Topic	Frequency	Core Ideas
1. Raising number of the beneficiaries.	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Doubling the number of beneficiaries as initiatives of BLGU
2. Conduct information drive	Typical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reiteration of the information on Climate change
3. Re-planting trees	Variant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replacement of planting tree by the BLGU

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results, the researcher concludes that the climate change adaptation and mitigation activities of DSWD contributed substantial enhancements in environmental quality, economic prosperity, climate change awareness and the promotion of sustainable development activities that practices by the local communities inhabiting the province of Sultan Kudarat. It is essential for helping the communities to adapt and mitigate climate change, reduce poverty , and community resilience. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of community engagement and information dissemination in driving behavior change and fostering climate resilience. By leveraging various communication channels and participatory approaches, DSWD and LGUs can empower communities to take ownership of climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and sustainability.