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ABSTRACT

In local governance, planning plays a vital role to come up with programs that will answer the real issues. It is a tool in shaping the Local Government Unit to become more responsive to the needs of the people. However, no matter how good the planners are, without the basic data, leaders cannot plan and implement impact projects. It is in this necessity that the City Government of Calbayog collected, reviewed and verified data about the city.

With the City's participation in the City Development Strategy 2, the local leaders realized that the process is not just a mere assembly of major stakeholders and collecting data but an opportunity to affirm the basic mandate among those in the government in order to be mindful in contextualizing the development perspective and initiatives to effect sustainability and positive impact.

Thru the CDS process, data about the city were collected thus the real face of Calbayog City was seen clearly. Indeed, CDS is an elemental mechanism for all those in the mainstream of governance in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding and contextualized implementation of all developmental thrusts as transferred into programs, projects and activities.

The Local Government Unit of Calbayog took initiative in collecting data through Barangay Workshop Consultations, secondary data collection, key informants interview, household surveys and focused dialogues to form the City's Urban Karte, where all information about the city of Calbayog were put together. The data gathered were also compared to the existing data available from the different National Government Office, NGO's, People's Organizations and other private institutions for purposes of validation.

The City Planning and Development Office updated the City's Profile, and on his part, the Local Chief Executive created the Poverty Reduction Action Team to compliment the CPDO in identifying and analyzing issues and challengers. SWOT analysis and other strategies were utilized. After the finalization and revision of the Urban Karte, it was presented to the stakeholders for more in-depth analysis. Development planning tool place and consequently, priority projects were identified. Programs and projects on Poverty Reduction were implemented. So far, the City implemented the Calbayog Mariculture Zone, Marginal and Self-Sustaining Calbayog Livelihood Assistance Program, the Creation/Opening of the City High School, Kabuhayan sa Kagubatan and Susbaranan Barangay. Best Practices Contest, the first in the region, and The Coastal Zoning Project which was adjudged First in the recent League of Cities Best Practices Award 2003.

At present, monitoring and evaluation is ongoing to ensure that the program is in progress and really moving towards the attainment of its objectives. With all the efforts of the City in reducing poverty, data become imperative tool much in order to come up with a program that will answer the real needs of the majority, if not, all of its populace.

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I. Introduction

In achieving the vision of the city, governance is very much necessary in order to effectively and efficiently served the constituents. This will involve participatory planning in order to come-up with a realistic and responsive programs. However, basic data about the city is important considerations in planning in particular and governance in general. It is essential in analyzing the city's strength, opportunities, threats and weaknesses. With recent statistics revealing that Calbayog has a catchment area of 1.2 million people, which is expected to grow in the next few years, as an agricultural city, we are encourage to utilize our potentials to serve the population and the rest of the region. Many investors are now taking interest in doing business with our city. With this notable chances for growth, we are bound to find out what we need and what we can give and this is where basic data is necessary.

Being in private business and public service for quite a long time, I have encountered people specially from financial institutions asking for a complete data in any business proposal I made. With this experience, in my simple yet comprehensive generalizations, I can say that basic data is very much important. It is an imperative tool for development and in public service it is a significant tool in local governance. In our case, we focus our attention on agricultural opportunities in order to become more competitive city.

II. Calbayog CDS Experience

When I took the highest position in our city, I have no other choice but to review all the available data about Calbayog. I can't think of any impact or simple project because we then lacked the necessary data and even if there were, I'm not so sure when and how it was gathered. I'm not in position to question the credibility of the people who did it but, rather, I'm more interested on the process of data gathering. My purpose is simply to go deeper and as much as possible to repackage our city so we can have a new hope and new direction, to make sure that every tax collected and every centavo disbursed by the city will go to where it is supposed to go.

I sought the assistance of the City Planning and Development Coordinator and his staff to give me or help me extract, review and validate available data. We reviewed all the project proposals, monitored the implemented projects and found out that most projects were not responsive to the needs of the people.

I was so grateful that Calbayog was included to the CDS 2 program of the World Bank and League of Cities. We had the chance to adopt the process. For some local chief executives, the process was so tedious and involved much time, effort, and resources. For me, it was the best process because thru it, we slowly saw the real face of Calbayog, a place which is more than what we know and what we see and that is beyond our expectations. As we went thru the process, we discovered more about our city. We even saw why we moved slowly and

found out what we should do to fast track our development in order to move forward than its usual slow phase.

Some people might be interested yet asking what CDS is all about. The City Development Strategy (CDS) is both a planning process and a product of partnership among individuals who wish to help evaluate and shape the future of every city. Its objective is to guide the LGU to have direction thru vision/mission formulation. Further, it will give the city a clearer direction for economic development with the aim of creating more employment opportunities; to develop a consensus building process to establish the city's priorities, strategies and activities; to assist local authorities outline their financing and investment strategies; and, to guide local capacity for more effective urban management.

The City Development Strategy is guided by the following principles:

1. Livability

What can be done to ensure a healthy and dignified standard of living for the city's residents?

2. Competitiveness

How can the city be more competitive in the global economy?

3. Bankability

How can cities be more financially sustainable? How can public-private sector partnership be provided and/or enhanced?

4. Good Governance

How can a city's management be improved? How can accountability, integrity and transparency be made an integral part of a city's management.

Local leaders realized that the process was not just a mere assembly of major stakeholders and collecting data but an opportunity to affirm the basic mandate among those in the government in order to be mindful in contextualizing the development perspectives and initiatives to effect sustainability and positive impact.

To come-up with a real direction, we also invited people from Evelio Javier Foundation to assist us and facilitate in the VISION/MISSION formulation. Presently, our City is guided by our vision:

“Calbayog City, developed and transformed into sustainable Agri-industrial community, serves as trading and economic growth center in Region VIII” with a mission.

“To Uplift the quality of life God-loving Calbayognons led by well-motivated and professional public officials and employees of integrity, in partnership with self-determining community.

Reflecting on the vision and mission of our City, we used the Basic Data to formulate our strategies. Using the available data, we undertook different activities to validate the information thru:

1. Brgy. Workshop/Consultation
2. Interviews
3. Household Survey
4. Focused dialogue
5. Key informants interview
6. Secondary data collection

We also had exchange notes with other National Government Agencies, NGO's, and PO's, on their available information to make sure that basic data about the City are true. After the validation of data, the city profile or the Urban Karte was finally drafted and it was presented to the group of stakeholders and representatives from every barangay. The data in the Urban Karte was again validated where issues and challenges were Identified and analyzed.

Let me show you some specific yet important data that impels us to re design our program on agriculture. As I mentioned earlier, as an agricultural city, our task to make the City of Calbayog competitive using its agricultural opportunities. It is at this stage that we go back to our basic data specially on this city's agricultural products so that we can set new direction in improving our agricultural sector. We Need a comparative data on our basic agricultural products, for us to plan out and decide what move should be made and establish specific measures to improve local production.

1. Abaca Production

Year	Area Planted in Has.	Production in kgs.	FGP/Kg.	Amount in Pesos
1999	3,423.76	1,540,960	20	30,813,800.00
2000	3,423.76	1,286,814	13	16,728,582.00

2. Coconut Production

Year	Area	Production	Price/Kg.	Copra in	Amount in
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	Planted in Has.	in Nuts		MT.	Pesos
1998	36,869	30,968,312.00	18	5,161.55	92,907,936.00
1999	36,869	43,873,192.00	14	7,976.94	111,677,216.00
2000	36,869	121,234,872	9.5	24,246.00	230,337,000.00

3. Banana Production

Year	Area Planted in Has.	Production in kgs.	FGP/kg.	Amount in Pesos
2000	859	869,156	4	3,476,624.00
2001	859	869,156	4	3,476,624.00

4. Demand and Supply of Rice Production

Year	Population	Production in kgs.	Demand in kgs.	Variance	Amount at P 15/kg.
1999	143,460	5,578,300	12,624,480	(7,046,180)	(105,692,700)
2000	147,187	5,342,103	12,952,456	(7,610,353)	(114,155,295)
2001	151,455	7,728,117	13,328,040	(5,599,924)	(83,998,853)

With the data presented, it shows that decrease in abaka production is alarming as it goes down to 61% compared to our coconut which is growing. While most Calbayognon, claims that our city could be a rice granary in the first district of Samar, data shows that rice production/supply is very low as compared to the demand of the entire population.

On the other hand most of us believe that our city have sufficient supply of fruits and vegetables, but sad to say that huge percentage of our demand are still imported Cebu and other places. It is a fact that we are helping other economy to grow at the expense of our money. Our production clearly show that it should be improved to meet the demand of the Calbayognons.

Production Report of Vegetables and other Crops

CROPS	CY 2000		CY 2001	
	Area PlantedHarvested (Ha)	Production (kg)	Area PlantedHarvested (Ha)	Production (kg)
Ampalaya	2.03	7,003.00	2.99	12,938.50
Eggplant	1.5458	4,415.50	1.2	5,716.50
Pechay	2.547	2,537.75	0.70	2,874.50
Carrots	0.012	43.00		

Camote	8	13,650.00	6.2	13,560.00
S-Pepper	0.1446	200.00	0.07	34.00
Okra	0.4381	320	0.30	848.00
Pole-Sitao	0.3801	658.00	0.20	603.50
Baquito Beans	0.10	50.00		
Tomato	0.509	1,444.00	0.10	50.00
Green Onion	0.40	3.00	0.008	9.00
Cassava	0.10	400.00	3	4,420.00
Squash	0.509	552.00	0.75	768.00
Upo	0.509	342.00	0.02	215.00
Gabi (Yutia)	0.75	1,075.00	0.75	1,822.00
Cucumber	0.20	513.00	0.008	56.00
Mongo	0.1474	89.00	0.0416	132.00
Patola	0.059	138.00	0.10	585.00
Kangkong	0.0505	300.00	0.60	734.50
Peanut	0.3705	150.00		
Ginger			0.50	200.00
TOTAL	18.795	33,883.25	17.5376	45,566.50

Importation of fruits from Cebu and other places

Year	CEBU	OTHERS	TOTAL	AMOUNT AT 50/KG.
1999	22,128	14,752	36,879	1,106,375
2000	33,479	22,319	55,798	1,673,950
2001	34,401	22,934	57,335	1,720,050
TOTAL	90,007	60,005	150,012	4,500,375

Importation of vegetables from Cebu and other places

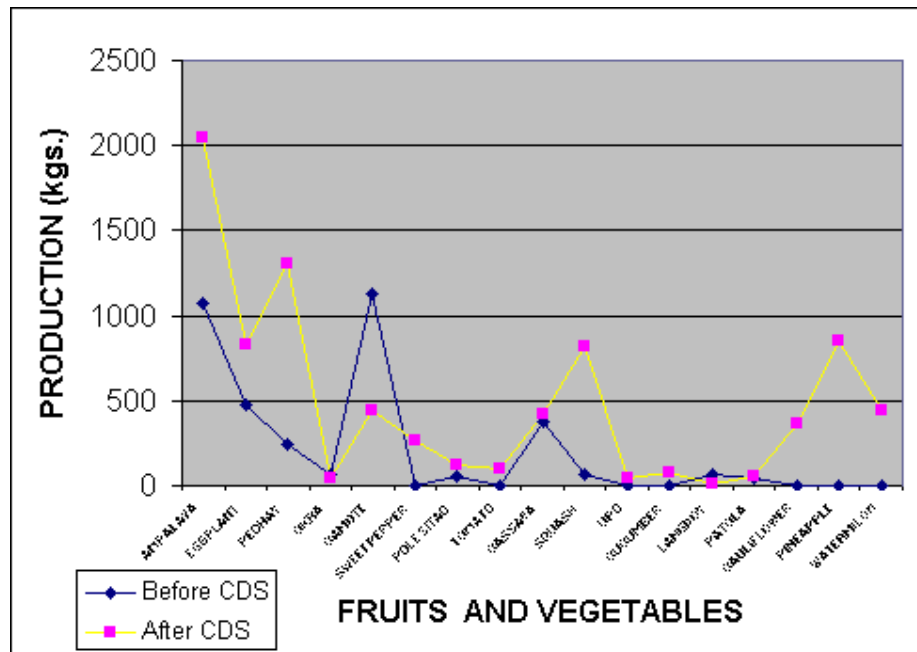
YEAR	CEBU	OTHERS	TOTAL	AMOUNT (Php)
1999	199,148	132,765	331,913	4,978,688
2000	301,311	200,874	502,185	7,532,775
2001	309,609	206,406	516,015	7,740,225
TOTAL	810,067	540,045	1,350,112	20,251,687

With this alarming reality the present administration is focused more on our agricultural productivity by giving lion share of the current budget to the city agriculture office. Thru validating our data, we were able to found out that there is a need to enhance our agriculture sector in order to achieve our vision, by increasing our production and we are happy to note that our economy is moving using our agricultural opportunities.

Let me compare our production before and after CDS.

COMPARATIVE AVERAGE MONTHLY REPORT ON VEGETABLES AND OTHER CROPS' PRODUCTION FOR THE YEAR 2001 BEFORE CDS AND SIX MONTHS THEREAFTER

CROPS	Before CDS	After CDS
AMPALAYA	1078.17	2,042.60
EGGPLANT	476.33	825.40
PECHAY	239.50	1,300.00
OKRA	70.67	45.40
CAMOTE	1130.00	446.00
SWEET PEPPER	0.00	263.60
POLE SITAO	50.25	125.60
TOMATO	0.00	104.80
CASSAVA	372.50	420.00
SQUASH	64.00	816.20
UPO	0.00	44.00
CUCUMBER	0.00	73.60
LANGKOY	61.17	16.00
PATOLA	48.75	52.20
CAULIFLOWER	0.00	364.00
PINEAPPLE	0.00	850.20
WATERMILON	0.00	448.00



Average production of fruits and vegetables as a result of adoption of City Development Strategy (CDS) tremendously increases. Moreover, fruits that were never produce prior to its adoption are now become manifest as shown in the graph.

Source: City Agriculture Office

By necessity, I created the Poverty Reduction Action Team to collaborate with the City Planning and Development Office for an in-depth identification of issues and challenges, thus, Strategy Formulation and Development Planning took place. The PRAT was also tasked to evaluate and monitor the projects and programs of the City.

Presently, because of CDS process and proper data gathering we are able to identify that our vision should be anchored on the Acronym CALBAYOG itself, which means “**C**ompetence using its **A**gricultural Opportunities to become **L**ivable and **B**ankable, **A**chieved by **Y**outhful outlook of development thru **O**utstanding **G**overnance.”

Using our validated data, we finally drafted our program based on **GO FORWARD** strategy, which became our guide in formulating programs and projects, specifically on:

- G** - Good governance
- O** - Organizational Reform
- F** - Financial Stability
- O** - On-going Consultation
- R** - Reduction of Poverty (Livability)
- W** - Work for the People (Livability)
- A** - Agricultural Productivity and Economic Recovery
(Comprehensive/Livability)
- R** - Rehabilitation of Natural Resources (Livability)
- D** - Development anchored on Democratic Principles to
become a competitive city.

Several projects are planned in line with the Go Forward Program. For my first term as City Mayor, we were able to implement the Calbayog Mariculture Zone, MSS CLAP, Reopening of the City High School, Kabuhayan sa Kagubatan, and Susbaranan Brgy. Best practices award, the first in Region VIII and the Coastal Zoning Project which was adjudged as First Placer in the 2003 – League of Cities Best Practices Award.

With the new mandate, we are monitoring our previous projects and at the same time busy in planning for a new projects/program for profile, with all the efforts of the city in reducing poverty, data become an important tool in order to come up with a program that will answer the real needs of the majority, if not, all of its populace.