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Orion's MDG Localization Progress Using the CBMS Data

Preliminary Statement

I wish to thank the Angelo King Institute for this opportunity to share with you our experiences on the use of the CBMS in the localization of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in Orion, Bataan. From the time you had your study tour in Orion during the barangay validation in Bilolo for some foreign visitors implementing CBMS, our development initiatives has never been the same again.

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Brief Profile of the Municipality of Orion

Before I go further let me just give you some brief profile of the Municipality of Orion. Our municipality is one of the 11 municipalities and 1 city comprising the Province of Bataan which is located in the western part Central Luzon. It has a total land area of 6541 hectares or approximately 65.41 squares kilometers.

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The municipality is approximately 132 kms away from Manila by land, and around 50 kms across Manila Bay. It is about 8 kms. south of Balanga City, the provincial capital, and about 20 kms.north of Mariveles, the southernmost municipality in Bataan.

The major economic activity in Orion is farming and fishing, Palay and mango being its major produce. Orion has been reclassified into a 3rd class municipality on 2006.

Application of the CBMS in the MDG Initiatives of Orion

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In 2005 Orion was tapped to localize the MDG along with five other municipalities in Northern and Central Luzon through the initiatives of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) and the Social Watch Philippines. It was in Sagada, Mt. Province during "Conference for the Capacity Development of Partner LGUs in Localizing the MDGs" that we come to know of the CBMS, the system that will provide us a picture of poverty situation and other form of human deprivation that the whole municipality is suffering.

In 2005 the father and son team of Congressman Albert S. Garcia and Governor Enrique T. Garcia, spearheaded the implementation of CBMS in Bataan. In April 2006, Orion started the enumeration phase of the CBMS. To date, our municipality has the distinction of being the front liner in terms CBMS implementation in the province.

While Orion's focus on the use of CBMS is mainly as a tool to address poverty in response to its commitment to localize the MDG, now the whole municipality and all the 23 barangays are using it as the basis in formulating the Annual Investment Plan and identification of priority programs, projects and activities.

The CBMS is instrumental in convincing the 23 barangays to synchronize our act together in responding to the basic needs of our constituency. The conduct of the MDG Responsive Barangay Budgeting has become a venue to address the problem area in each barangay in response to the call of the MDG.

Identification of MDG Concerns in Orion Based on CBMS Data

For Orion, localizing the MDG means responding to the problems based on CBMS results. The response should be carried out from the very grass root that is the barangay.

During the barangay validation, the CBMS core indicators are presented in relation to the MDG goals being addressed. For instance in Barangay Bilolo together with the rest of the 22 barangays, any response to high number of 6-12 years old children who are not attending school will eventually respond to the call of the Millennium Development Goal Number 2, achieve universal primary education. On the problem on high drop out among high school age due to lack of money to pay for miscellaneous fee, I immediately provided a personal fund to pay for it.

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Most local government units are aware that there are many unmet needs in their area. Oftentimes these unmet needs have no clear picture so to speak thus no definite resolution has been done.

In Bilolo, during the barangay validation it was established based on the CBMS data that Purok 3,4,6 and 7 has no source of safe water, few weeks after, a water tank was put up in response to this basic need of the people in that specific purok.

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From the municipal level point of view, barangays' appreciation and commitment on the CBMS is very crucial. The decision of the 23 barangays to procure for a personal computer to house the CBMS data is a good entry point to make them act or respond to the problems in their respective localities.

In Barangay General Lim, after the CBMS results were disseminated, priority projects were identified based on the CBMS results which eventually and formally found its way to the Annual Investment Plan for financing. Such projects include community based manpower training on welding in partnership with the municipality, proposal on the establishment of a barangay high school for funding of the congressional district and other projects.

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On the service delivery of some local entities like the Orion Water District which covers some 17 barangay the result of the indicator, proportion of household without access to safe water is used as the basis of client's perception on the quality of their services. Although, there is a resistance on the part of the said entity, there is an action to address the findings and it is given priority based on its future policies and directions.

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In 2005 despite the hesitation of the then elected municipal officials on the perception that it might be a political suicide if such program is to be implemented, Municipal Ordinance No. 05-0202-038, "An Ordinance Prescribing the Rules and Regulation for the Effective Implementation of the Sharing Scheme on the Cost of Medicines Dispensed at the Orion Municipal Health Center, as Recommended by the Orion Local Health Board." was enacted by the Sangunian Bayan. The ordinance provide for the payment of 50% of the cost of medicines by patients who seek medical treatment at the OMHC except for the indigent, senior citizens and persons with disabilities who gets it 100% free. The absence of the list of indigents cast doubts in its effective implementation, however in 2006 using the CBMS simple composite index and other documents, list of indigent is now being used to really identify the deserving beneficiaries in the municipality.. This program did not only eliminate the "dole out mentality" among some people in the municipality, it has extended the budget of procurement of medicines by 60%, as the 50% cost of medicines is intended to procure additional supplies.

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To date Orion has a total 2509 enrollment to the PhilHealth Medicare Para sa Masa Program. In its initial implementation, identification of beneficiaries has been the task of the Barangay Chairman. Having no list of the indigent, as expected relatives, friends, political allies and those close to the chairman benefited from the program.

However in the later part of 2006, when CBMS is almost done, I instructed the MPDO to generate the simple composite index, which temporarily becomes the basis of identifying the deserving beneficiaries. The original list of beneficiaries were further trimmed down and cleaned up by juxtaposing the list with other related documents in possession of the LGU.

Programs and Projects in Response to MDG Concerns

The implementation of the Budget Operation Manual for Barangays for 2008 becomes a very timely entry point for the municipality to convince the 23 barangays to make use of the CBMS results as the basis for utilizing the resources responsively to the need of the community. This year's barangay budgeting saw the shift from a mere infrastructure wish list to a list of basic social services that a barangay is ought to deliver.

To complement this, the usual allocation of P65,000 each barangay for small infrastructure which total to P1.5 Million yearly under the AIP of the municipality has been scratch. The said amount was instead increase to P2Million allocated for projects in response to the MDG with the CBMS result as the based document. To further encourage them to localize MDG in their respective barangays. The municipal government launches the awards and merit system for most responsive barangay in terms of MDG localization and other categories. Availment of the said budget will be in the form of project proposal which can be implemented solely by the barangay or on counter parting scheme with the municipality.

For projects that are really beyond the capacity of both the barangay and municipality, the same have been listed for priorities for external funding for endorsement to the province and other funding agencies. On the other hand Congressman Albert Garcia has this commitment to implement projects anchored on CBMS results.

Future Plans

The localization of the MDG has long been the concern of most LGUs, being a part of the regular delivery of basic services. What differs now is that it is more focused, and what is important is that it must be institutionalized and should be among the priority development initiatives of all the local government units.

Already within our reach is the formulation of the Barangay Socioeconomic Profile and Barangay Development Plan, following the scheme of identifying projects based on CBMS result for programming and prioritizing the same through yearly implementation under the Annual Investment Plan or for outside funding source.

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At the municipal level reformulation of the Local Development Plan and the on-going ELA workshop will observe the same scheme:

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To encourage support from the local community as well as kababayan abroad, Orion has put up a section in its official website the www.udyong.com on the initiatives and progress of MDG localization. Although improvement of the said section is still in progress, the main goal of this section is to disseminate to as many people the Orion's effort on poverty alleviation and to encourage their participation and financial support in achieving the localization of the MDG in Orion.

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Much has still to be done. Utilization of the CBMS data is still to be maximized. What is important for now is that we have started it right, our plans are now based on evidence. By 2009 Orion has set its mind for the second round of the CBMS. EnP. Andy R. Avorque, our MPDC is yet to realize his plans to measure my performance as I graduate in 2010 and provide a benchmark for my successor, using the CBMS data.

Good day to all of you!