

# “STATUS OF THE KALAHI (KAPIT-BISIG LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN) PROGRAM: BASIS FOR A COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK FOR SECTORAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OF THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.”

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**Abstract:** This study evaluated the status of the KALAHI Program of Region 1 as a basis in evolving a collaboration framework for the sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

It specifically studied the (1) level of functional performance of the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group along: (a) Planning, (b) Investment programming, (c) Budgeting, and (d) Monitoring and evaluation, (2) the degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group; (3) the extent of collaboration of the local government units, private sector, and regional line agencies in the implementation of the KALAHI Program (4) the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the KALAHI Program and (5) the status of the KALAHI Program. The study also formulated a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council based on the status of the program.

The study used the descriptive survey research design. There were 152 respondents distributed as follows: 17 private sector, 51 regional line agencies, and 84 LGUs broken down into four (4) provinces, 19 municipalities and 61 barangays. A questionnaire

was used as the main tool in gathering the data which in turn were analyzed using frequency counts and weighted means.

**Keywords:** collaboration framework, KALAHI Program, local government units, private sector, Regional Line Agencies, Sectoral program management,

## INTRODUCTION

The relevance of regional development for national development cannot be overemphasized as the development of regions, considering their growth potentials, would help promote sustainable growth of the national economy through a more rational population distribution, increased employment, and enhanced productivity.

Today, most nations are veering towards a more democratic and decentralized approach to plan and implement their various development activities. Given these advances, the emergence of new regional dynamics calls on countries to fine-tune current regional development policies and practices and to develop new ones that are not only more in sync with the present and future global context but also with the

governance systems being adopted that are becoming more and more decentralized and grassroots oriented.

The Philippines is one of the developing countries that have made great strides in adopting regional development perspectives in national development planning. To date, regional development planning and policy-making in the country has been in existence for more than thirty years. In about half of this span of time has occurred the long process of its adoption, organization and implementation before it became institutionalized in the national development policy and planning systems.

The institutionalization and administrative decentralization of regional development policy and planning systems has led to the establishment of the regional development council (RDC) in each region. The Council proper was then composed only of the local government units and regional line agencies. However, in the desire of the government to strengthen the RDC, a significant move was undertaken to involve citizens, business groups, and non-government organizations (NGOs) in regional development efforts and this paved the way for the inclusion of the private sector in the RDC membership (Bautista, 1993).

The Regional Development Council is considered as the formal administrative vehicle for regional planning and development. As an extension of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and as the planning body of the region, the RDC is responsible for undertaking a comprehensive and detailed survey of the resources and potentialities of the region and for preparing, on the basis of such a survey, long range and annual plans within the guidelines set by the NEDA.

At best, the RDCs performed and continue to perform largely coordinative functions since they are composed of all heads of local governments, all heads of regional line agencies and the private sector. Looking at its structure, the RDC head has no line authority over its members; hence, it is not taken seriously by some of its members (www.pids.gov, 05 December 2008).

However, it should be emphasized that it is in the RDCs that we can find the germ for eventual regional development. Efforts should therefore be directed towards strengthening their role not only as coordinative bodies but as serious planning and implementing bodies.

On account of achievements, it is undeniable that from the time they were established to date, a number of strategies and programs for regional development have been implemented by the regional development councils. One of the development projects that is being pursued by the Regional Development Council

is the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (KALAH) Program (Linking Arms against Poverty) of the Arroyo administration for reducing poverty in the country.

Launched in 2001, it is anchored on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 2001-2004 and uses the convergence of resources, programs and projects, and stakeholder and sectors as key ingredients for poverty reduction.

KALAH) converges the poverty reduction efforts of the government bureaucracy at all levels, as well as those of the private sector, the civil society, and most especially, the basic sectors to address their economic, political, and socio-cultural dimensions of poverty concurrently. The KALAH) approach believes in converging various stakeholders from government and civil society for a more comprehensive and holistic poverty reduction scheme (www.dswd.gov.ph, 07 November 2008).

The conceptual underpinnings of this approach to development and poverty reduction are three-fold. The first is to establish the context in which communities can be empowered to manage their assets, lives and livelihoods in ways that restore their sense of responsibility and human dignity. The second links communities and social networks into the policy and administrative structures of the state, particularly by strengthening the linkages between communities and the LGUs. The third focus is to establish a development model that uses investment programs as a platform to promote representation, accountability, and poverty reduction.

As the KALAH) forerunner, the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) consolidates and coordinates flagship projects of government agencies along the KALAH) strategic thrusts. It takes charge of ensuring the fulfillment of commitments to KALAH) barangays and monitoring and evaluating KALAH) efforts in cooperation with the National KALAH) Convergence Group (NKCG) and the Regional KALAH) Convergence Groups (RKCGs). The RKCG is set-up within the existing structure of the RDC for all regions except the National Capital Region and the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao. It is composed of a) the heads, designated focal persons or the authorized representatives of the regional counterparts of the NKCG agencies, b) the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development, c) the Presidential Assistant, d) Deputy Presidential Assistant, e) NAPC Sectoral Council members residing in the region, f) regional chapters of the leagues of local government units, g) the Local Poverty Reduction Officer of each province and highly urbanized city in the region, and h) other government agencies, civil society, private sector,

and basic sector groups that the RKCG may invite to sit as members.

To this end, an evaluation of the functional performance of the RKCG is useful in determining the status of the KALAH program. Moreover through the interlinked activities of the program, the researcher sought to determine the extent of collaboration and involvement of the members of the RKCG in the planning, design, implementation, and management of local development activities. Since the RKCG is a sector under the umbrella of the RDC, its performance is a reflection of the performance of the Regional Development Council. Thus, an evaluation of the RKCG is an evaluation of the performance and operations of the Regional Development Council.

After 30 years of regional planning, it is an opportune time therefore to comprehensively examine and assess the public administration aspect of regional development policy-making and planning and reflect on how the current practice and governance can be reconfigured to suit present development concerns. This study is an attempt to put together these long years of experiences and practices of RDC-1 through an evaluation of the RKCG particularly on its functional performance and collaboration with the Local Government Units, Regional Line Agencies and Private Sector and to know how the same have influenced or affected the policymakers in actual regional policy and planning.

Results of this study were the basis of evolving a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In the attempt of the government to bring about administrative decentralization and the integration of planning and implementation for development, the Integrated Reorganization Plan (IRP) of 1972 created the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the central economic and social development planning agency in the Philippines. The creation of the NEDA meant the merger of all economic agencies and ad hoc bodies with overlapping and duplicating roles in planning.

NEDA is tasked with formulating definite and consistent long range and annual economic and social development plans and programs in consultation with the private sector and other appropriate government agencies. It also coordinates the implementation of approved national, sectoral and regional development plans and programs.

The NEDA assists planning at the regional levels through its regional offices. These offices extend technical assistance and administrative support to the

regional development council in each region in the formulation of regional development plans, policies and guidelines and in the coordination of all planning and programming activities of local and national entities at the regional level (Philippine Development, 1996).

In the Philippines, a development council is a structure which is responsible for coordinating the efforts of agencies and instrumentalities of government, both national and local which are involved in the planning and implementation of development programs and projects for a particular geographic area. Composed of the local leaders, heads of national line agencies operating in the area, and private sector representatives, the council was envisioned as a mechanism for the national and local leaders to work together.

These councils are organized at the regional, city/municipality, and barangay levels. Their task is to weigh needs against available resources, determine the areas for development, and keep all concerned informed in order to obtain from them their maximum contribution to the planning process for the development of the area. The process calls for continuous consultation and dialogue between those who program and prepare the plans and those whose experience, knowledge or services are required to assist in the implementation of the program (Brilliantes, 1979).

The Regional Development Council, hereinafter, referred to as the RDC, is the highest policy-making body in the region and serves as the counterpart of the NEDA Board at the regional level. It is the primary institution that coordinates and sets the direction of all economic and social development efforts in the region. It also serves as the forum where local efforts can be related and integrated with national development activities.

The RDC was established to provide a regional planning body to oversee the overall socio-economic development of the region. Its primary task is to coordinate development planning and policy making in the region.

The RDC was organized in 1974 through Letter of Implementation (LOI) No. 22 issued on 31 December 1972 pursuant to the implementation of the Integrated Reorganization Plan (IRP) of 1972. Its present constitutional foundation rests on Article X, Section 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which provides that:

“The President shall provide for regional development councils, or other similar bodies composed of local government officials, regional heads of departments and other offices, and representatives from non-government organizations

within the region for purposes of administrative decentralization to strengthen the autonomy of units therein and to accelerate the economic and social development of the units in the region" (De Leon, 2002).

To make the RDC more effective in carrying out its constitutional mandate, it was reorganized through Executive Order No. 308 issued on 05 November 1987. On 12 April 1996 the RDC was again reorganized with the issuance of EO 325 to further strengthen the RDCs to make it more responsive to new developments in socio-political fields and to ensure sustainable and broad-based development process. Recognizing labor as a primary social and economic force, EO 384 was subsequently issued on 07 December 1996 thereby institutionalizing the labor sector representation in the RDCs. The regular membership of the Council was further expanded in 2002 to include the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), taking cognizance of their role as major stakeholders in the generation of high-level and technical manpower at the regional level (EO 143).

The RDC, under EO 325, has become more responsive to the increased autonomy of the LGUs as provided for by the 1991 Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160). In particular, EO 325 was issued to enable the RDC to respond effectively to the increased needs of the LGUs for technical assistance in the areas of planning, investment programming, and project development in the light of the LGUs' strengthened roles and greater responsibilities. The RDC's relevance is further highlighted through the major functions it is mandated to do such as coordination of the implementation of programs in the regions that involves several local government units and agencies. The technical assistance it provides to LGUs, upon request, extends to the preparation of local development plans and programs and fulfilling requirements of LGU projects proposed to be funded under the Official Development Assistance (ODA). The NEDA Regional Office serves as the secretariat of the RDC.

In practice, regional development planning has been fairly consistent over the years in terms of process. RDCs go through the established planning, programming, and budgeting process. This involves preparing the regional development plans, regional development investment plans, and annual investment plans as well as review and endorsement of the proposed budget of the agency regional offices to the agency central offices for consideration in the final agency budget proposed to Congress ([www.pids.gov.ph](http://www.pids.gov.ph), 05 December 2008).

Regional planning is indicated through the regional development plan, regional development investment plan, and regional physical framework plan. There is a need, however, to integrate these plans horizontally and to integrate them vertically with the national plan (Sec. 14, Art X, 1987 Philippine Constitution). Furthermore, the commendable purpose of administrative decentralization underlying the creation of the RDC has not been realized in the course of the conduct of development planning in the country. A study revealed that based on the experience of Region II, the RDC has generally been lacking in coordinative capacity, a factor that severely limits its effectiveness in regional planning and implementation (Bautista, 1993).

Under the structure of the RDC is the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group (RKCG). The RKCG is created to coordinate the implementation of poverty reduction programs to the line agencies, local government units and the private sector.

It is believed that the anti poverty programs of the governments are designed, selected and implemented in response to different theories about the cause of poverty that "justify" the community development interventions.

Poverty in its most general sense is the lack of necessities. Basic food, shelter, medical care, and safety are generally thought necessary based on shared values of human dignity. However, what is a necessity to one person is not uniformly a necessity to others. Needs may be relative to what is possible and are based on social definition and past experience (Sen, 1999). Valentine (1968) says that "the essence of poverty is inequality."

The first theory of poverty is focused on the individual as responsible for their poverty situation. This theory blames individuals in poverty for creating their own problems. Accordingly, with harder work and better choices, the poor could have avoided their problems. This theory also ascribes poverty to lack of genetic qualities such as intelligence that are not so easily reversed (Bradshaw, 2000).

However, Weber (2001) said that the belief that poverty stems from individual deficiencies is old. He said that poverty is created by the transmission over generations of a set of beliefs, values, and skills that are socially generated but individually held. Individuals are not necessarily to blame because they are victims of their dysfunctional culture.

From a community development perspective, if the theoretical reason for poverty lies in values and beliefs, transmitted and reinforces in subcultures of disadvantaged persons, then local anti-poverty efforts need to intervene to help change the culture. This is socialization as policy.

The third theory does not look into individual as a source of poverty, but to the economic, political, and social system which causes people to have limited opportunities and resources with which to achieve income and well-being (Rank, 2004). Much of the literature on poverty now suggests that the economic system is structured in such a way that poor people fall behind regardless of how competent they may be. The problem may be partly because the minimum wage does not allow families to be economically self-sufficient (Jencks, 1996). The problem of the working poor is increasingly seen as a wage problem linked to structural barriers preventing poor families from getting better jobs, complicated by limited number of jobs near workers and lack of growth in sectors supporting lower skilled jobs (Tobin, 1994).

Elimination of structural barriers to better jobs through education and training has been the focus of extensive manpower training. However, in spite of perceived importance of education, funding per student lags, teachers are less adequately trained, books are limited, and the culture of learning is under siege. This systemic failure of the schools is the reason poor people have low achievement (Chubb and Moe, 1996).

A parallel barrier exists with the political system in which the interest and participation of the poor is either impossible or is deceptive. Recent research has confirmed the linkage between wealth and power and has shown how poor people are less involved in political discussions, their interest are more vulnerable in the political process, and they are excluded at many levels. Coupled with racial discrimination, poor people lack influence in the political system that they might use to mobilize economic benefits and justice.

Accordingly, if the problem of poverty is in the system rather than in the poor themselves, a community development response must be to change the system. Changing the system can take place at three levels. From a grassroots level, social movements can exert pressures on vulnerable part of the system to force desired change. A second strategy for changing the system involves creating and developing alternative institutions which have access, innovation, and a willingness to help the poor gain well-being. Finally, change can occur through the policy process (Page and Simmons, 2000). The range of social policies that can be adjusted to accomplish poverty reduction include providing jobs, raising wages, assuring effective access to medical care, expanding the safety net and coordinating social programs. In this case the poor and their advocates need to be more politically mobilized.

The final theory of poverty looks at the individual and their community as caught in a spiral of

opportunity and problems, and that once problems dominate, they close other opportunities and create a cumulative set of problems that make any effective response nearly impossible (Bradshaw, 2000). The cyclical explanation explicitly looks at individual situations and community resources as mutually dependent. This theory has its origins in economics in the work of Myrdal (1957), who developed a theory of interlocking, circular, interdependence within a process of cumulative causation that helps explain economic underdevelopment and development. Myrdal notes that personal and community well-being are closely linked in a cascade of negative consequences, and that a closure of a factory or other crisis can lead to a cascade of personal and community problems including migration of people from a community. Thus, the interdependence of factors creating poverty actually accelerates once a cycle of decline has started.

The complexity of the cycle of poverty means that solutions need to be equally complex. Helping poor people achieve self-sufficiency is an increasingly significant phase in poverty reduction. A key piece in reducing poverty is by increasing social capital among communities. Community development programs should be comprehensive to include a variety of services that can meet individual and community needs. The key to doing extensive programs without becoming too uncontrolled is to collaborate among different organizations to provide complimentary services. Collaboration involves networks among participants, where coordination maybe formal or informal. Another key is through community organizing by which local people can participate in poverty reduction processes. Breaking the cycle of poverty must include individual participation. For the poor, empowerment is central to this issue.

Along this line, a strong institution is needed to effectively implement the anti-poverty program of the government. In this context an evaluation of the performance of the RKCG is needed to assess its effectiveness as the forerunner of the KALAHÍ in the region.

In justifying the organization of the RKCG, the contingency theory was adopted. In line with the contingency theory of management, management is understood to be a situational discipline, it recognizes that there is no single best way of managing, equally suited to all situations, and that the application of principles and concepts has to be tempered according to the nature of the organization at hand (Tendero, 2000).

Much of the literature on management today accepts the view that how an organization should be constituted and managed depends upon its strategy

for relating to its external environment. Once strategy has been determined, it provides the context within which decisions concerning the structure, systems, and other aspects of institutional design must be taken.

Determining organizational strategy is difficult in the government for the following reasons: incommensurability, political instability, intrusion of politics into administrative matters, incertitude regarding governmental intentions, and the need for administrators to appear to be supporting all interests. Sometimes, the turbulence of the government environment will suggest that the best strategy is to keep a low profile and focus on surviving. At other times, however, with the right combination of administrators and political circumstances, a more forthright strategy should be possible for an organization. A great deal of course, will depend on how well the members get along and how skillfully the organization handles this key relationship (Plumptre, 1988).

In either event, strategy remains of central importance to questions of organizational design and management. An organization's ability to develop and realize a well defined strategy appropriate to the different areas of its mandate will largely depend upon its ability to handle external relationships. Thus, a key question in assessing the state of management in a government organization is, how well does it manage these relationships? Is it appropriately organized to do this job effectively?

The ministerial relationship is of central importance, having a powerful impact upon organizational priorities and methods of operation. Decisions on how to handle these relationships will affect such issues like the role of the members, the performance of functions of the members, and the distribution of responsibilities among officials.

The quality of an organization's client relationships tends to be a function of public perceptions of the merit and relevance of its programs. The government must devise ways to ensure that relationships are sound and that services are relevant and responsive. From an organization's viewpoint, the central concern should be to ensure that the organization is appropriately constituted and operated to be able to keep in touch with its stakeholders and to manage relationships with them effectively.

Relationships affect the organization's authority, its accountability framework, and its resources. If relations are good, plans are likely to be approved more easily. Conversely, if relations are poor, a request for special consideration is likely to be denied, ignored or even impeded (Leveriza, 1990).

Most well-run organizations manage their relationship with care, an aspect which is silent in most management guidelines. It has to be noted that members in the organizations are regarded sometimes as allies, often as opponents. Part of an organization's strategy in achieving a policy goal may involve the careful orchestration of relations with other departments or other levels of government. Such intentions will obviously not be spelled out in documents intended for circulation outside the organization, which explains why plans may not always fully reflect the priorities and strategy of the organization.

Collaborative and competitive relationships may occur with other levels of government or with other organizations. In principle, different governments and agencies within a specific jurisdiction are supposed to be working together in the common public interest. In practice, the public interest is subject to a lot of different interpretations. As a result, there are often border skirmishes and sometimes pitched battles between organizations and jurisdictions trying to extend their power or to achieve different policy objectives (Plumptre, 1988).

Good management in government often means the ability to turn potentially competitive relationships into collaborative ones and to fend off potential predators without incurring any loss of position or territory that is not justified in the larger public interest. A well-organized organization is equipped to protect its policy interests and to manage its relationships with other government organizations effectively.

Clearly, organizational officials must ensure that external relationships are effectively handled. They must be able to read the maze of information from external sources and derive from it a reasonably clear set of priorities which can provide a frame of reference for management.

Another way of determining the effectiveness of an organization is by considering the collaborative relationship of its members. In understanding the concept of collaborative relationship, it is best to look at it in view of the "fit" approach to organizational design. In this approach, the fundamental idea is that there must be coherence among all the different elements of an organization. The idea of fit rejects the limited notion of an organization as a simple hierarchy to be operated in accordance with standard principles of management. Rather, it envisages an organization as a sort of organic entity, in which the parts exist in a relationship of mutual dependency and support with each other, and collectively, with the external environment of the organization. In such a miniature ecosystem, the components sustain and

support each other, and if a serious weakness exists in one part of the system, it affects all others.

The fit concept stresses the integral nature of organizations. That is, since all elements of the organizations are linked in a symbiotic relationship, what a manager does in one part of his or her organization should be consistent with what is done in another (Wildavsky, 1966). The objective in building and managing an organization should be to get the elements of the organizations working together to increase organizational productivity. If they are not linked, they will either drag the organization off course or nullify each other's effects.

The idea of fit also demands that managers should not simply let an organization evolve in the expectation that it will develop naturally into an efficient and productive entity. An organization is a complex web of persons, relationships, expectations, structures, processes, systems, and traditions. An unplanned institution cannot be expected to develop as desired. As Peter Drucker has observed "The only things that evolve in an organization are disorder, friction and malperformance" (Greenhouse, 1966). Organization design and structure require thinking, analysis, and a systematic approach. The choice of structural forms makes an economic difference: that is, not all structural forms are equally effective in implementing a given strategy. Therefore, managers should allocate the time and effort necessary to plan their organization form, just as time and effort are allocated for the formulation of other plans.

This approach to organizations cautions against looking for solutions to problems of organizational performance in only one or two places. In particular, it warns against relying too heavily upon structural change to achieve organizational goals. That organization structure has an impact on organizational performance is seldom in doubt. However, many managers seem excessively impressed with the ability of structural change to affect the way an organization works and insufficiently aware of the degree to which other factors may be the cause of problems in performance.

In building an organization capable of effectively carrying out its mandate and strategy, the following factors must be considered: people, the formal structure and the decision-making processes, the planning and control system of the organization, methods of internal communication, the use of technology, and culture (Plumtre, 1988).

Today, competition makes it critical for organizations to get the most out of their investments, whether those investments be people, processes, or systems. With information being the most valuable asset that is created by these investments, successful

organizations are the ones that can leverage this knowledge to make key decisions.

To ensure that organization has the processes in place to leverage organization intelligence and drive performance, one must adopt the organizational performance and best practices analysis. By analyzing the organization's performance management and best practices, one can identify the performance strengths, areas for immediate improvement, and opportunities for cost savings. In addition to all of this, a customized best practices roadmap that maps out step by step processes for launching into a culture of performance excellence is provided.

The premise of the Organizational Performance and Best Practice Analysis is to measure all the critical performance management processes necessary to be a high performing organization. By fully understanding the areas where the organization utilizes best practice processes well, one can leverage those strengths and resources to areas that need them most.

The benefits of the Organizational Performance and Best Practices Analysis are the following: (1) Delivers the best solution, while leveraging current resources; (2) Provides comprehensive knowledge of the organizational best practices and processes; (3) Identifies performance strengths and weaknesses; (4) Maximizes existing systems through best practice standardization; (5) Identifies opportunities for cost savings; and (6) Maps out the most feasible approach for implementing immediate improvements ([www.lifecycle-performance-pros.com](http://www.lifecycle-performance-pros.com), 07 October 2008).

In analyzing the performance of an organization, one has to consider the design of an organization as this allows the goals of the organization to be met. Once the goals and design or structure has been identified, then the organization needs to be examined in four dimensions: (1) Goal - manage function subgoals so that organization goals get accomplished; (2) Performance - getting customer feedback, tracking actual performance, comparing the performance to set targets, taking corrective action where needed, and resetting goals; (3) Resource - manage people, equipment, and money; and (4) Interface - manage the "white space" between the various functions or units (Plumtre, 1988).

Relationship, which looks at the flows among major groups, rather than specific activities, must also be considered because this creates a broad picture of the organization. Moreover, the various units, functions, departments, or individuals expected to participate in or impact the process must also be identified. By considering the existing relationship in the organization, one may understand how the work in the organization is currently being done so that

"disconnects" can be discovered and fixed. Disconnects are missing, confusing, unneeded, or misdirected inputs or outputs.

From a political scientist's point of view, new forms of regional governance based on cooperation and collaboration among all relevant actors in a regional framework are without doubt central pre-requisites, if a sustainable regional development is to be reached. But these conditions themselves are dependent on a special institutional framework. One of the most widely discussed questions of modern political theory is how cooperation and collaborations evolve and how they can be stabilized (Braun, 1999).

Successful cooperation in order to reach a sustainable development is not self-evident, because sustainable development could turn from a consensus-oriented concept into a cause for conflict, if social actors have to change their individual behavior for achieving the common good of sustainable development (Bocher and Krott, 2002). New forms of governance to reach a sustainable regional development have to be enforced in the political process. In this political process, actors negotiate possible alternatives for regional development. Actors wanting to include a certain policy to become a central aspect of a strategy for regional development have to know which factors will enable them to reach their goals in the political process. It is not sufficient to formulate ideals of regional development if one wants to establish new forms of regional governance in the region. Rather, the regional political processes, the regional institutional framework and regional problems as underlying conditions for cooperation and collaboration have to be integrated in the policy evaluation or sustainable development processes. For this paper the path to cooperation and collaboration is the most important objective. This path is connected with the ideal of formulating indicators which can help regional stakeholders to evaluate their relationships and success in the future.

Regional development is about regional communities improving their economic, social, cultural, and environmental well-being by fully developing the potential of the region and its people. Key elements underlying successful regional development include cooperation among all spheres of government, including the private sector in building community capacity to adjust to change, growing and attracting businesses, diversifying regional economies, fostering innovation, and working cooperatively on public and private sector infrastructure development and regional investment.

Regional actors have to feel a common pressure of problems that lead them to initiate a cooperative regional development strategy. Moreover, sustainable regional development can be reached if powerful

interceders and partners support regional development initiatives. Local partnerships are more successful, if they can win actors as supporters who are prominent in the region. Aside from this, it is equally important if the involved actors are able to learn from each other in order to get over potential conflicts in negotiations.

While regional communities need and should take responsibility for their own future, government, LGUs, and private sector support critically underpins the development process. The networks among these three sectors are the basis for effective regional development and governance. If every actor in the region has a fair chance to participate, the regional legitimization of the network increases. Likewise, it has to be noted that regional management constitutes the core of the regional development network; therefore, the support required from these three sectors must cover the following important dimensions: (1) Vision - a shared vision to strengthen the perspective of regional development in government decision making, including bottom up regional thinking as an integral part of government policy development processes, and to create a sense of community ownership in the future of the region; (2) Commitment - a long-term commitment that provides regional communities with the certainty they require to develop and implement strategic development plans, working in partnership with industry and government; and (3) Policy and Programmes - while regional development policy must support and be consistent with national economic, social and environmental objectives, targeted regional initiatives can improve economic performance, address industry restructuring pressures and provide equitable access to services (Bocher, 2002).

To this end, the development of a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council is important as this will set out the roles of the three sectors in regional development and the principles that they should adopt to achieve sustainable economic, social, and environmental outcomes for regional development.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Poverty reduction is the centerpiece of the present administration's program of government. This goal has been clearly articulated in the MTPDP, which is considered by the incumbent president as the government's poverty plan.

The existing poverty program of the Arroyo Administration dubbed as KALAHÍ or "Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan" is promoting five major strategies: (1) asset reform, (2) human development services, (3) employment and livelihood



opportunities, (4) social protection and security from violence, and (5) participation in governance. This program adopted the convergence approach to poverty reduction.

As the KALAHI forerunner, the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) by virtue of Republic Act 8425 (Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act of 1997) serves as the coordinating and oversight body in the operationalization of the government's poverty reduction initiatives. It provides enabling policies to ensure efficient and successful implementation of the KALAHI. It consolidates and coordinates flagship projects of government agencies along the KALAHI's strategic thrusts. It takes charge of ensuring the fulfillment of commitments to KALAHI barangays, and monitoring and evaluating KALAHI efforts in cooperation with the NKCG and the RKCGs. It also consolidates and reports on the nationwide status of KALAHI implementation.

The NAPC which is coordinating the President's poverty program is adopting a two-pronged approach in its localization efforts: (a) improving coordination among national agencies in implementing poverty-related programs through the National KALAHI Convergence Group (NKCG); and (b) strengthening poverty planning at the LGU level. In the first approach, the NKCG organized a regional counterpart called the Regional KALAHI Convergence Groups (RKCG) which is tasked to coordinate the implementation of specific poverty programs of national government agencies at the local government levels.

Convergence groups were established at the national and regional levels to facilitate the effective implementation of the KALAHI program, that is, proper targeting of KALAHI sites, and planning, coordinating, and monitoring of poverty reduction programs, projects, and resources of the government among others.

At the national level, the NAPC lead convenor serves as chair of the NKCG with the NAPC as its secretariat. At the regional level, the Office of the Presidential Assistant or the Regional Development Officer acts as chair of the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group, the vice chair is selected among its members. The NEDA regional office serves as the secretariat of the RKCG. The institutional structure of the RKCG is similar to the NKCG (Appendix M), with four (4) sub clusters conforming to the program focus of the administration: (a) asset reform; (b) human development services and social protection; (c) livelihood and employment, and (d) institutionalization and capacity-building. Membership in the clusters is based on the relevance of organizational mandates, thus, any government agency or civil society representative may become a

member of any cluster and may opt to join more than one cluster ([www.napc.gov.ph](http://www.napc.gov.ph), 05 October 2008).

The RKCG is a special body created under the Regional Development Council (RDC) to adhere to the call of President Arroyo in combating poverty at the grassroots. Through RDC ExCom-Resolution No. 35, s. 2002, the RKCG was formally organized, officers were elected and their responsibilities and functions were defined.

The RKCG is mandated to perform the following functions: preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs, including the formulation of policy recommendations thereof; integration of poverty reduction plans and programs of local government bodies, line agencies, SUCs, GOCCs, and special development authorities in the region into the regional poverty reduction plan; review, prioritization, and endorsement to NAPC and other relevant and concerned agencies the poverty reduction investment program/budgets of the region for funding and implementation by concerned national agencies; promotion and encouragement of the inflow and allocation of private investments in the region to support regional development objectives, policies and strategies supporting poverty initiatives in the region; review, prioritization, and endorsement of poverty reduction-related national plans, programs, and projects proposed for implementation in the region; initiation and coordination of the development, funding and implementation of regional and special poverty development projects such as those involving several agencies or LGUs;

The following are the responsibilities of the RKCG: mobilization of concerned government agencies, organizations, sectors, or entities such as the Local Poverty Reduction Action Officer (LPRAOS), whenever necessary; mobilization of the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development (CORD) to facilitate resolution of RKCG matters that need Cabinet action; recognition and coordination with focal persons, teams, and/or committees that LGUs may establish at their respective levels as RKCG counterparts; enhancement of basic sector participation, especially the NAPC sectoral council members in the regions, and improve coordination with the concerned local government units as well as local civil society groups; close collaboration with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to maintain a strong link between anti-poverty and internal security efforts of the government; formulation and approval of its internal rules, including but not limited to, the conduct of regular and special meetings, declaration of quorum, election of officers, approval of minutes and resolutions; screening of NGOs and other civil

society groups interested in RKCG membership and participation in KALAHI-related activities; conduct of periodic review and assessment of programs, projects and activities; and performance of other related functions and activities as may be necessary to promote and sustain poverty initiatives in the region.

The creation of the RKCG, however, has been viewed as an unnecessary move given the existence of the Social Development Committee (SDC) also under the Regional Development Council which has similar membership as the RKCG and can take on its functions. The major difference in the two committees was the designation of (a) a presidential assistant appointed by the President as Chair of the RKCG and (b) NAPC sector representatives. The former ensures the direct link of the committee with the Office of the President ([www.undp.org.ph](http://www.undp.org.ph), 27 November 2008).

The KALAHI program implementation structure comprises the following: (a) A National Steering Committee (NSC), an inter-agency steering committee for policy and coordination functions comprising National Economic Development Authority, National Anti Poverty Commission, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Finance, Department of Budget Management, Commission on Audit, the Caucus of Development NGO Networks, and regional NGO representatives. The NSC provides policy guidelines on poverty targeting, sets goals for the implementing agency, and assures institutional convergence on poverty reduction outcomes. It also ensures a continuous review of the project's contribution to achieving the Social Reform Agenda goals and linkages with the economic recovery agenda. (b) A technical working committee drawn from agencies represented on the NSC. The technical working committee is responsible for development of technical manuals and coordination between technical support services at the field level. (c) The implementing agency (IA) which is the Department of Social Welfare and Development, which establishes a National Project Management Office responsible for the overall implementation and financial management of the project. The LGUs have responsibilities and involvement in the implementation of the program at the following levels: (i) Regional Project Management Offices: At the regional level, there is a core group of 15 people working exclusively on the project. The regional management is responsible for prioritizing the poorest municipalities in the region based on poverty indicators, provide assistance to provincial level consultants, train trainers, and kick off the KALAHI project in the region. (ii) Role of provinces: The

provinces play an important role through (i) provision of data for the ranking of municipalities, and (ii) provincial development plan, which provide the funding for higher order infrastructure investments to support those at the community and municipal levels. (iii) Role of municipalities: Likewise, the municipalities play an important role in this project in terms of (i) monitoring, (ii) problem solving at monthly inter-barangay assembly meetings with beneficiary communities, (iii) provision of technical services on request, (iv) support for community investments through complementary municipal development planning, and (v) auditing and accounting reports. However, it is the exclusive role of the inter-barangay meeting to choose which barangays and projects to be provided grants. To enable the municipalities to fulfill the above-mentioned roles, capacity building is provided under the proposed project.

Thus, within the purview of these concepts, this study was conceptualized and designed to develop a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

To gain a better comprehension of the study, a paradigm was made based on Stufflebeam's CIPP (Context, Input, Process and Product) model for systematically evaluating the organization's effectiveness. ([www.context+input+process+product+evaluation](http://www.context+input+process+product+evaluation), 05 October 2008).

The paradigm of the study is interpreted as follows: to assess background information and potential needs and problems within the RDC environment, the context would include the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the ten point Agenda of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, the legal bases of RDC, the local government code, and the RDC structure; the inputs were the Regional Development Plan for the KALAHI, the RKCG organizational structure and the functions and responsibilities of the RKCG.

To know the status of the KALAHI Program, the process was done through an evaluation of the RKCG's functional performance, fulfillment of responsibilities, and collaboration of Local Government Units, Regional Line Agencies and the Private Sector.

To strengthen the result of the evaluation, documentary analysis and SWOT analysis were also conducted. In line with this, a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the RDC was evolved and its level of functionality was assessed by a panel of experts.

The schematic diagram as presented in Figure 1 also illustrates the relationships between and among the

variables of the study. The interaction between the input and the process variables determined the status of the KALAHÍ Program. The analysis of results served as basis for proposing a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

### Statement of the Problem

The major purpose of this study was to determine the status of the KALAHÍ program as a basis in developing a collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following pertinent questions: (a) What is the level of functional performance of the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group as perceived by the members along the following areas: a. planning, b. investment programming, c. budgeting, and d. monitoring and evaluation? (b) What is the degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group? (c) What is the extent of collaboration among the local government units, private sector, and regional line agencies in the implementation of the KALAHÍ Program? (d) What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the KALAHÍ Program? (e) What is the status of the KALAHÍ Program? (f) Based from the study what can be formulated as collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council? (g) What is the level of functionality of the proposed collaboration framework?

### HYPOTHESES

(a) The level of functional performance of the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group in planning, investment programming, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation is satisfactory. (b) The degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group is satisfactory. (c) The extent of collaboration of the local government units, private sector, and regional line agencies in the implementation of KALAHÍ Program is moderately strong. (a) There are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the KALAHÍ Program. (b) The status of the KALAHÍ Program is satisfactory. (c) A functional collaboration framework for sectoral program management of the RDC can be formulated.

### Importance of the Study

The result of this study is hoped to be of great help in raising public awareness and in building up constituency for regional development. This study is significant also in reinforcing the concept of collaboration and partnership among the local

government units, regional line agencies, and private sector for a participatory regional development planning process. Moreover, it can be an instrument in informing the stakeholders of their social responsibility in reducing poverty in the country.

To the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group, this study will strengthen the RKCG in coordinating and monitoring poverty reduction programs among its various stakeholders. Moreover, it will ensure dissemination of all necessary information on KALAHÍ development and the convergence of programs and projects at all levels of execution particularly to its counterparts at the local level.

To the Regional Development Councils, this study will strengthen the RDC not only as coordinative bodies but as serious planning and implementing bodies of regional development plans. It will help the institution develop mechanisms that will allow wider representation in policymaking and development planning.

To the LGUs, this study will provide a clear direction in improving their performance as members of the RDC. Moreover, this study will help them identify the developmental direction and strategies that they should take in implementing their local development plans in accordance with the regional development plan.

To the Regional Line Agencies, this study will provide them with guidelines in fulfilling their substantial role in development planning, thus, ensuring better work performance as members of the RKCG and consequently, as members of the RDC.

To the private sector, this study will encourage them to take a more active role in regional policy-making and development planning.

To the constituents who are direct or indirect beneficiaries, this study will try to expose the internal working condition in the Regional Development Council through an evaluation of the performance of the RKCG. Thus, they may better understand the situation in their locality and appreciate the efforts of those tasked to implement the development programs of the government, and in the end be encouraged to participate in the local planning and decision-making.

To the research enthusiasts, this study will provide benchmark information in related research undertakings.

Finally, this study will be of greatest help and significance to the researcher as this will surely widen and enrich her horizon regarding the operations of regional policymaking and development planning. The study will also make the researcher more aware and informed of the sincere efforts of the government in adopting the concepts of

multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborative decision-making processes in economic development and good governance. As an instructor in political science, the study will provide substantial inputs to her teaching.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Design

The study made use of the descriptive design to describe the existing conditions of relationships, operations and processes that are going on, practices that are prevailing, or trends that are developing in the Regional Development Council of Region 1. Descriptive method is designed for the investigator to gather information about present conditions (Sevilla, 1992). It aims to provide essential knowledge or information about the nature of a situation and it allows the researcher to explore the causes of a particular phenomenon. Moreover, the descriptive design helps the researcher in making adequate and accurate interpretation of gathered data by adopting a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying and tabulating data about prevailing practices, and cause and effect relationships.

To determine the status of the KALAH I program in Region 1 this study analyzed the strengths and weaknesses including applicable opportunities and threats in the functional performance of RKCG, fulfillment of its responsibilities and the collaboration of its members specifically the local government units, regional line agencies and the private sector. Based on the results of this study, a collaboration framework for an effective sectoral program management of the regional development council was developed for implementation. The level of functionality of the framework was evaluated by five (5) expert evaluators who are all members of the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group. The evaluation was made to validate the functionality of the collaboration framework as a basis for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council

### Population and Locale

The study was conducted in Region 1. The members of the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group were the respondents of this study. The population comprised three (3) groups of respondents. (a) 84 local government units broken down into: 4 provinces, 19 municipalities and 61 barangays; (b) 51 regional line agencies; and (c) 17 private sector representatives. Total enumeration was used in this study.

The three groups of respondents were further categorized according to the clusters of the KALAH I program. These are as follows: (a) asset reform 84

LGUs, 14 RLAs and 2 PS; (b) human developmental services 84 LGUs, 19 RLAs and 3 PS; (c) social protection 66 LGUs, 15 RLAs and 2 PS; (d) livelihood and employment 84 LGUs, 17 RLAs and 7 PS; and (e) institutionalization and capacity-building 84 LGUs, 14 RLAs and 2 PS.

### Instrumentation

The researcher made use of the questionnaire as the main tool in the collection of data. Said instrument was drafted by the researcher in consultation with her adviser and further scrutiny or critiquing of the panel members. The items in the questionnaire were made in line with the problems of the study. They were particularly designed to elicit unequivocal replies. The questions were subjected to statistical treatment.

The structured questionnaire that was administered to the respondents for reply was divided into three (3) parts. Part I contained queries regarding the functional performance of the RKCG along planning, investment programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, Part II is on the degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of RKCG; Part III focused on the extent of collaboration of Local Government Units, Regional Line Agencies and the private sector.

The items of the questionnaire were adopted from the mandate of the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group.

### Validity of Instrument

The content of the instrument was evaluated by the members of the Oral Examination Committee to establish that the questionnaire would answer what it purports to answer. Comments and suggestions of the same body on its content and construction were incorporated to ensure proper direction and treatment of the instrument.

### Reliability of the Instrument

In order to establish the reliability of the questionnaire the researcher subjected the instrument for pilot-testing. The instrument was tested at the Regional Development Council in Baguio City with ten (10) respondents.

Using Cronbach Alpha, the computed reliability coefficient of 0.714 indicates that the questionnaire is very reliable.

### Data Analysis

The data that were gathered in this study were checked for completeness and were tabulated in accordance with the objectives of the study.

The mean rating was the basis for ascertaining the level of functional performance of RKCG, degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of RKCG, and the extent of collaboration of LGUs, RLAs and PS.

The strengths and weaknesses were identified based on mean responses to specific measures. Mean responses of 4.20 and above along the level of functional performance, degree of fulfillment of responsibilities, and extent of collaboration were considered strengths. Mean ratings lower than 4.20 were treated as weaknesses. The identified threats and opportunities were based on the results of the study, researcher's observations, and interviews.

Using SWOT analysis in developing a collaboration framework, the researcher identified and matched the given internal capabilities (strengths and weaknesses) and external environment (threat and opportunities) in a two by two network of relationship. These are as follows: (a) internal strengths matched with external opportunities, (b) internal weaknesses relative to external opportunities, (c) internal strengths matched with external threats, and (d) internal weaknesses relative to external threats.

The SWOT served as the bases in evolving the collaboration framework.

The high rating set for the strengths is attributed to the high standard of performance of the NEDA Regional Office 1 as recognized by the NEDA Awards and Incentives System (NAIS) management awards for CY 2007.

Region I Office (NRO I) won the "Most Outstanding NEDA Regional Office," the "Most Outstanding Regional Director" and the "Best Management Tandem of the Year" for CY 2007. This was the second grand slam for NRO I, the first was in 2005.

Accordingly, NRO I seized the most coveted award for a NEDA regional office because it met all its work targets for the year that contributed well to the major activities of the NEDA Central Office, particularly the Regional Development Office (RDO).

It is clear from these achievements that the Ilocos-Pangasinan Regional Office of NEDA is a model in regional development. Therefore, in order to sustain this exemplary performance of NRO1, all sectors of the RDC should meet this standard of performance set by the agency. Thus, the RKCG, as one of its sectors should be at par with this performance for it to be recognized as a model RKCG.

**Categorization of Data.** The five-point Likert Scale was used to quantify and qualify the data, in the different parameters.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Level of Functional Performance of the RKCG

Table 3 maps out the level of functional performance of the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group according to the Local Government Units, Regional Line Agencies and Private Sector.

Based on the data, generally the level of functional performance of the RKCG is very satisfactory. This could be explained by the active leadership of the RKCG Chairman as well as the poverty focal persons of member-agencies. Moreover, this is a good indication that the LGUs, RLAs and PS members of the RKCG are bent on reducing poverty in the region. It attests to the fact that at the regional level, the MTRDP is in consonance with the ten-point agenda of the PGMA whose main objective is to fight poverty.

As noted, the RKCG registered a very satisfactory performance in the areas of investment programming and planning with mean scores of 3.81 and 3.80 respectively. This implies that the investment programs are fully consistent with the plans of the RKCG. The finding plainly shows the existence of a meaningful regional plan linkage, as the objectives of the plan were translated into targets. This is evidenced by the work plan and accomplishment report of the RKCG for CY 2008

(Appendix N) where projects were implemented based on the plan's operational targets. These accomplishments may also be credited to the enhanced technical capability for regional planning and investment programming of the regional staff of the RKCG.

The very satisfactory rating of the LGUs, RLAs and PS also shows that bottom-up vertical integration of planning is being promoted by the RKCG. This is evidenced by a regional poverty reduction plan that integrates the provincial plans as well as the different development plans of government corporations and special development bodies in the region ([www.neda.gov.ph](http://www.neda.gov.ph), 18 December 2008).

However, in an interview with some LGU respondents, it was claimed that bottom-up vertical planning from the local level to the region is not done in practice due to the absence of local plans during the RDP formulation, which in turn is due to the unsynchronized schedules for the local and regional plan preparation. The latter are attributed to the following factors: (a) LGUs are generally free to determine their own timetable and processes for plan formulation independent of the national and regional planning schedules; (b) even the DILG, which exercises oversight responsibility for local planning, does not coordinate the local schedules for plan preparation nor does it regularly issue guidelines for the medium-term or annual local plan preparation (Abad, 2003); (c) since election of all elective officials is done at the same time, a bottom-up approach implies having to wait for lower level plans before the higher level plans can be finalized, which might take some time given different local level planning capabilities ([www.pids.gov.ph](http://www.pids.gov.ph), 05 December 2008).

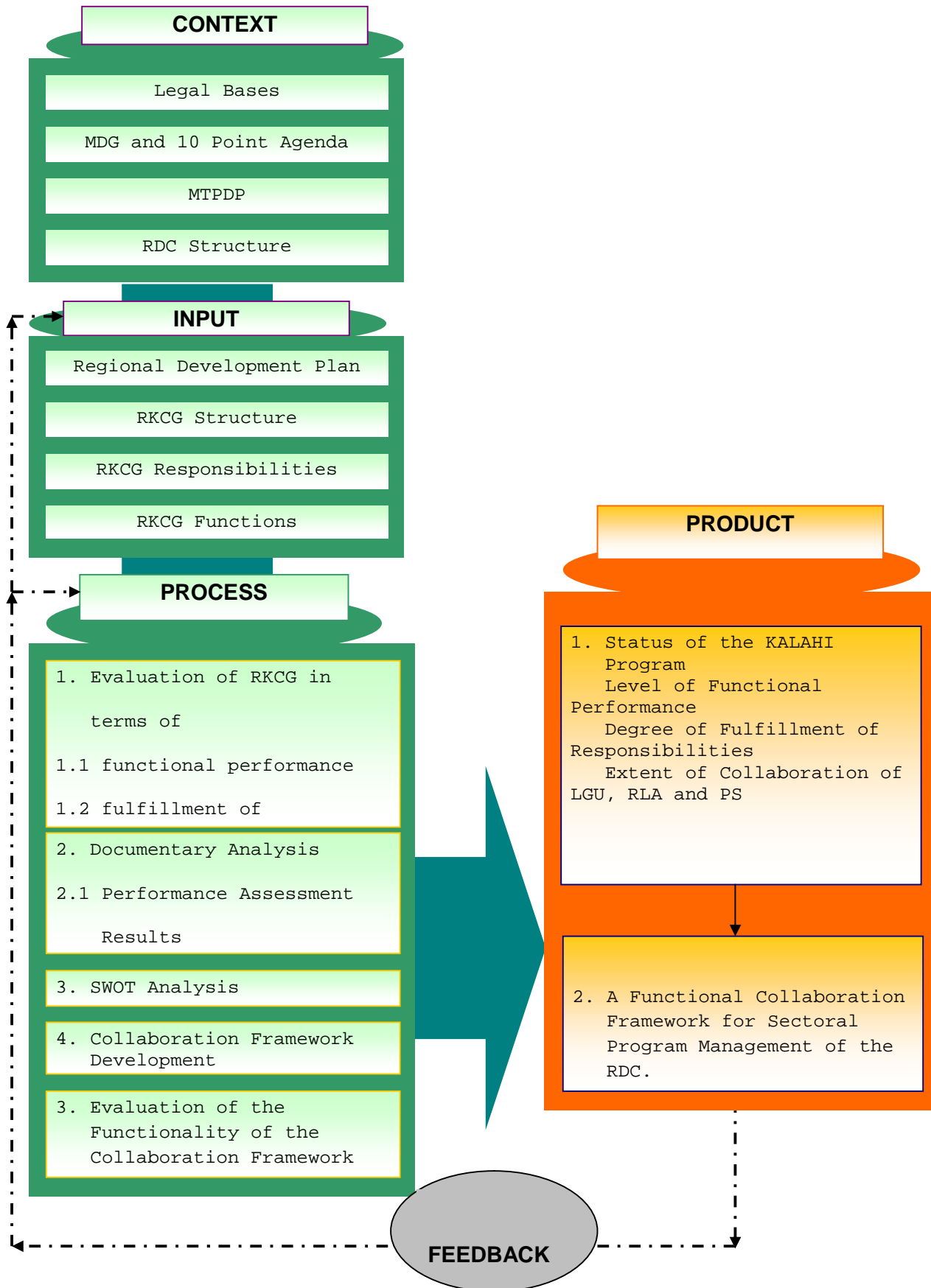


Figure 1: The Research Paradigm

Note: Table 01: Intentionally not included

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
A. Local Government Units (LGUS)	84	55
Provinces	4	
Municipalities	19	
Barangays	61	
B. Regional Line Agencies (RLAs)	51	34
C. Private Sector (PS)	17	11
Total	152	100

Accordingly, even in setting aside the timing problem, respondents claimed that there is no motivation for local governments to submit their plan to the RDC-RKCG since local chief executives are aware that regional development plans are prepared even without local plans. There is no formal mechanism for ensuring that the project listing of the provinces for the regional plan followed a process of integration from the barangay level (Abad, 2003). In addition, there is little incentive for the LGU to submit local plans “upwards” to the RDC-RKCG since the latter has limited financial resources in implementing programs and projects. Studies have also indicated that the regional plans of the past were not really considered in the preparation of LGU plans (Manasan, 2003). Furthermore, the sheer volume of LGU plans also makes it impractical to be checking consistency between local plans and regional plans.

These perceptions of some LGU respondents, however, have not affected the high rating of the LGUs in the performance to the RKCG in the planning area. Accordingly, most of the respondents admitted that the absence of the local plans does not mean that the regional plan is not able to capture the concerns of the province and its municipalities since provincial development officers and the various local chief executives, as well as civil society members based at the local communities sit in the standing committees of the RDCs which usually prepare the RDP. This is evidenced by the attendance of the LGU representatives in the various meetings and seminars conducted by the RDC-RKCG as reflected in the RKCG Accomplishment Report for CY 2008 (Appendix O).

A deeper analysis on the assessment of the LGUs on the performance of the RKCG reveals that the RKCG has only adequately performed its function in providing assistance to local government units in the

preparation of local poverty alleviation plans and programs. This indicator garnered the lowest mean rating of 3.43. Along with this is the minimal performance of function of the RKCG in coordinating the preparation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs. This implies that there are issues that have to be resolved in the areas of planning and investment programming to ensure compliance with the mandated function of the RKCG. For one, the granting of assistance may only be rendered by the RKCG upon the request of the LGUs ([www.napc.gov.ph](http://www.napc.gov.ph), 05 October 2008).

In an interview by the researcher with the LGU respondents, it was admitted that such assistance was seldom requested because the LGUs are not willing to shoulder additional costs that may be incurred in the creation of poverty plans. Second, the relationship between the poverty reduction action plan, the annual development plan, and the annual investment plan has not been defined, giving the impression that the poverty plan is in addition to the plans required under the Local Government Code. As such the process of integrating the poverty reduction plan has to be clarified to ensure that poverty projects are funded as part of the annual budget of the LGU (Abad, 2003). Third, related to the costs involved, it is not clear whether LGUs will be complying with the requirement without any incentive other than their own accountability to their constituents during election time.

On the part of the RLAs, the respondents rated the performance of the RKCG as very satisfactory. This implies an acknowledgment, on the part of the RLAs, of the efforts and commitment of the RKCG in reducing poverty in the region.

In an interview with some RLA representatives, it was admitted that the plans and investment programs submitted to the RKCG for national funding were

practically all conceived by the central agencies of the regional offices representing the council except for some projects that were developed by the NEDA Regional Office and the LGUs in the region. It was admitted that even budgetary proposals for regional development were done by central agencies and the regional agencies are only serving as implementers of programs and projects in the region. Accordingly, this process has resulted most often to a problem in the mismatch of plans, investment programs and budgets.

This finding affirms the study of UNDP (2003) which states that poverty programs are highly centralized despite the beneficiaries being at the local level. All of the projects are nationally-initiated and is being implemented through the line agencies in the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group. In this case, the national government appears to be merely deconcentrating the implementation of the projects to their regional offices. By tapping the RDC for coordinating its various KALAH I programs, the government continues to rely on the line departments' regional offices for the KALAH I program implementation. This explains why there are some RLAs who are not supportive of the program. This is evidenced by the low rating given by the RLAs in the integration of poverty reduction plans and programs of LGUs, NGAs and SUCs into the regional poverty plans.

On the part of the NGOs, the high rating on the functional performance of the RKCG is an evidence that at the regional and local levels, the practice of participatory planning has been institutionalized. A proof to this is the permanent inclusion of private sector representation in the various committees at both the RDC and the LGUs. The Code, for instance, requires that at least 25 percent of the full membership of the LGU committees (e.g. local development council) be composed of non-government organizations. Considering that many civil society groups work closely with local communities, their membership in LGU committees is an opportunity to initiate projects that would benefit the communities. Not all LGUs, however, have been able to name the civil society representatives in the different LGU committees. There were also reports on the lack of genuine participation from LGUs in these committees (Manasan, 2003).

In an interview with the RLA and LGU members of the RKCG, it was revealed, based on observation, that the adoption of a more participatory planning process in poverty reduction of the region has not been easy, because the different non-government representatives, business, civil society and private organizations carry with them sector agendas which

are not always consistent with government plans. This is evidenced by the low rating given by the NGOs in the integration of poverty reduction plans and programs of GOCCs and special development authorities into the regional poverty reduction plan. Compounding the problem has been the adversarial relationship between the government and civil society with the latter always suspicious of government and uncompromising in their positions (Manasan, 2003).

The considerable low ratings given to budgeting can be attributed to the minimal influence of RKCG-RDC in project approval and funding. This is because the RKCG have neither the development funds nor the power to influence the budget for a particular project including the budget for the projects of special development bodies in the region as its function is merely coordinative in nature. Funding for these projects comes from the national government budget, national government corporation funds, money from the LGUs or combined financing from these mentioned sources ([www.pids.gov.ph](http://www.pids.gov.ph), 05 December 2008).

Based on gathered documents, there were many projects, particularly infrastructure projects which were not implemented as planned because of lack of funding. This only reveals that there are weak points in the planning, programming and budgeting linkage from the regional to the central level. This calls for the development and design of administrative mechanisms for the effective integration of budgeting and programming processes. This low rating on the area of budgeting also suggests that budgets are not fully supportive of investment programs. As a result, investment programs tended to be biased despite the regional development and dispersal thrust of the government.

This finding affirms the study of Balisacan, et.al (2000) on KALAH I Caravan in Region 1. In that study, it was revealed that funding support for poverty reduction programs was inadequate and that RLAs had difficulty of refocusing resources to the KALAH I areas. These hindered the successful implementation of programs committed by other participating agencies.

In an interview with the LGU respondents, it was revealed that the link between planning and budgeting at the local level is weak. First, planning proficiencies differ across LGUs because some LGUs do not have development plans to start with. Second, many LGUs find it difficult to translate the plan into operational terms (Abad, 2003). Third, while the prescribed budgeting process may be followed by the LGUs, the local chief executive is still able to exert the most influence in setting budget expenditures, considering that local department heads are his appointees. Local plans are therefore not used as the



framework for the annual investment plans and the annual budget at the local levels.

The granting of autonomy to the LGUs by the Local Government Code gave LGUs some degree of fiscal autonomy, which allowed them to undertake budgeting activities separate from national government processes and with minimal supervision by other government agencies. This may also be a factor for this low rating on the area of budgeting. Evidently, this has challenged the relevance of the RKCG-RDC in regional development planning and implementation. Accordingly, policy questions on the relevance of regional authorities like the RDCs as well as the regional offices of NEDA and other executive agencies in view of the substantial functions already devolved to LGUs, surface frequently in agency budget hearings.

This indicates that the issue has remained vague and unresolved and thus, should be the subject of a more serious policy examination. In light of the avowed policy of decentralization, the participation of regional and local government officials in planning and decision-making therefore has to be improved.

In addition, the limited participation of the members of the RKCG in the planning process may also be a factor in the disconnect between planning and budgeting in the KALAHI program. Abad (2003) said that because of the lack of ownership of the poverty reduction plan by the members, one cannot expect genuine support to the plan objectives and the programs except from the few members who actively participated in plan formulation.

Since the plan is the framework of development in the region, the RLAs, LGUs and the private sector's involvement at the formulation and approval stage of the poverty reduction plan may make them more retrospective in pushing for projects during the annual budgeting season. In the study of PIDS (2002), it was revealed that the RDCs and the LGUs have found the existing programming and budgeting process frustrating for two reasons. First, central agencies claim that most of the regional programs and projects proposed by the RDC cannot be included in the central agency proposal because these were not thoroughly studied. Second, programs and projects which found its way to the approved central agency budget proposal were not provided funding support by the Office of the Budget Secretary.

Although a scheme was established to address the dissatisfaction in the programming and budgeting system through the establishment of the Regional Development Fund, still the problem persists. It has to be noted that the RKCG budget is taken from the very limited budget of the RDC, the pooled resources of the agencies and some subsidy from NAPC.

Planning, programming and budgeting processes would not be complete without effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place. At the regional level, it was revealed that the development targets contained in the MTRDP are monitored by the RDC regularly with the frequency depending on the availability of statistics. As observed by the members, the RDC-RKCG releases a report which serves as the monitoring report of the regional plan. Accomplishments are usually benchmarked against the targets for the year. Accordingly, the report is based on sector submissions. There is, however, a tendency to highlight accomplishments and explain shortfalls against targets, but detailed action program to remedy shortfalls are not usually given. Moreover, targets for succeeding years are adjusted depending on the extent of accomplishment in a given year.

Moreover, in terms of the KALAHI program, respondents and KALAHI implementers revealed that while the RKCG has a multi-sectoral assessment team deployed to target barangays to verify the MBN results and to get first hand information from the Municipal Mayor and the Barangay officials about the poor people's priority needs, monitoring is still inadequate in assessing the immediate effects of program implementation or service delivery, as such some programs on livelihood and employment, asset reform and human development services were not sustained. This finding affirms the study of Balisacan, et.al. (2002) when he averred that field visits were conducted but the monitoring and evaluation of projects were not strictly done. Accordingly, only physical accomplishments were accounted for because the monitoring and evaluation was tied up with the Regional Program Monitoring and Evaluation System (RPMES). In the study of Atawe (2006), it was suggested that the RKCG should explore the possibility of involving the municipalities and barangays in its sectoral planning sessions instead of relying solely on the report of the assessment team.

This corroborates the finding of Miguel (2005) that program implementers have conducted monitoring and evaluation but not on a regular basis. Furthermore, the monitoring and evaluation conducted were all focused only at the physical and financial targets of the projects and services. It has not yet measured the attainment of KALAHI objectives nor the relevance of measuring the performance of civil society and other stakeholders who are actively involved in the implementation of the KALAHI program.

In several field visits to the different identified KALAHI sites, it was surprising to know that only very few KALAHI barangays have its own functional local poverty reduction action teams (LPRATs). The

absence of functional LPRATs has made it difficult for monitoring to take place as contact to the intended beneficiaries is limited. In an interview with the Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Officers (PPRAOs), it was revealed that the municipal level does not submit its poverty reduction report to the PPRAOs for evaluation. Similarly, the Municipal Poverty Reduction Action Officers (MPRAOs) also claimed that the barangays do not regularly submit their report; thus, it can be inferred that coordination among the LGUs is lacking. This may be the reason why pro-poor programs that have been implemented earlier were not complemented, continued, maintained and sustained.

In general, it can be inferred that capacity constraints hamper LGUs in institutionalizing their monitoring and evaluation processes at the local level. As observed, the local monitoring and evaluation is usually associated only with on-site inspection, reportorial listing of accomplishments and/or cash flow and expenditure reports, de-linked from the local objectives and targets indicated in the local development plans. This is so because as claimed by Abad (2003), there is little appreciation by LGUs linking PPB processes with monitoring and evaluation outputs. Moreover, he said that after the passage of the Code, the DILG had not really been consistently monitoring compliance with the preparation of the plan by the LGUs nor were there sanctions for non-compliance. Hence, there had been reports that many LGUs have no development plans as required in the Code.

Across the three groups of respondents, the RLAs posted the highest mean rating of 4.22, followed by 4.05 and 3.30 of the private sector and the LGUs. This is an indication of the commitment of the three groups to reduce poverty in the region.

The high rating of the RLAs shows that the RLAs have assumed more leadership role than the PS and the LGUs. This is quite expected since the implementation of the KALAHÍ program in the region is largely spearheaded by the RLAs, supported by the PS and the LGUs. While this may be a great achievement for the RLAs, the low rating of the LGU only shows that the LGUs have substantial awareness on the functions of the RKCG.

It reflects the minimal effort of the RKCG to empower the LGUs to become the frontlines in the implementation of the poverty reduction program.

Meanwhile, the high rating of the private sector shows that the role of private sector in developing networks and linkages with other institutions is critical in forging partnership with the government.

### **Degree of Fulfillment of Responsibilities of the RKCG**

Table 4 presents the assessment of the respondents on the degree of fulfillment of responsibilities of the Regional KALAHÍ Convergence Group.

As manifested on the table, the overall evaluation was very highly fulfilled as reflected by the general mean of 4.23. This is an indication of the existence of a highly functional office responsible for the formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the KALAHÍ program in the region. This means that the region was able to put up a structure that will address poverty problems through coordination, program focus, stakeholder participation and mobilization of resources.

Further, it shows that the RKCG is appropriately constituted and operated to be able to keep in touch with its stakeholders and to manage its responsibilities and relationships with them effectively.

Leveriza (1990) suggests that relationships affect the organization's authority, its accountability, framework and its resources, thus it has to be sustained and managed effectively.

A perusal of the table reveals that close collaboration with the AFP and PNP and coordination with the concerned LGUs and local civil society groups were given the highest mean ratings of 4.46 and 4.43 respectively. This implies that the linking of military and civilian operations in poverty reduction is being done. Further, it demonstrates a strong link between the anti-poverty and internal security efforts of the RKCG as it was able to combine social development and nation-building functions and tasks of government agencies on social welfare and development with the anti-insurgency and internal security campaigns of the government's armed forces.

The low mean rating of 4.05 given to the mobilization of Cabinet Officer for Regional Development (CORD) to facilitate resolution of RKCG matters that need cabinet action attests to the fact that there were members of the RKCG who have insufficient awareness on the existence of such responsibility of the organization. This is particularly true to the local government units and the non-government organizations who claimed that their coordination is limited only at the regional level thus, the performance of such responsibility by the CORD at the national level is unfamiliar to them.

The low mean rating of 4.08 given to the conduct of periodic review and assessment of RKCG programs, projects and activities confirms that the RKCG

performs less in the area of monitoring and evaluation as this was also given a low rating in assessing the functional performance of the organization. This shows that the implementation of committed plans, programs and activities of the converged agencies and organizations were not

strictly monitored and evaluated. This further implies that the organization does not have functional systems and procedures for the implementation and evaluation of the impacts of the KALAH I in the region as well as in the local levels.

**Table 3:** Level of Functional Performance of the RKC G

<b>FUNCTIONS OF THE REGIONAL KALAH I CONVERGENCE GROUP</b>	<b>LGU</b>	<b>RLA</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>DE</b>
<b>PLANNING</b>					
1. Coordinate the preparation of regional poverty alleviation plans	3.43	4.18	4.18	3.77	VS
2. Coordinate the preparation of regional poverty alleviation investment programs	3.41	4.18	4.06	3.74	VS
3. Coordinate the formulation of policy recommendations for poverty reduction	3.52	4.33	4.24	3.87	VS
4. Integrate poverty reduction plans and programs of LGUs, NGAs, and SUCs, into the regional poverty plans	3.44	4.18	4.18	3.77	VS
5. Coordinate the implementation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs	3.60	4.27	4.29	3.90	VS
6. Integrate poverty reduction plans and programs of GOCCS and special development authorities into the regional poverty reduction plan	3.49	4.18	4.00	3.78	VS
7. Assist local government units in the preparation of local poverty alleviation plans and programs	3.43	4.37	4.24	3.84	VS
<b>SUB MEAN</b>	3.48	4.24	4.17	3.81	VS
<b>INVESTMENT PROGRAMMING</b>					
1. Review poverty reduction investment programs for funding and implementation	3.49	4.29	4.18	3.84	VS
2. Prioritize the poverty reduction investment programs for funding and implementation	3.41	4.37	4.29	3.83	VS
3. Endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs	3.39	4.25	4.00	3.75	VS
4. Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments	3.39	4.16	4.00	3.72	VS
5. Review and prioritize poverty reduction-related national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation.	3.53	4.39	4.29	3.90	VS
6. Endorse poverty reduction-related national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation	3.52	4.31	4.06	3.85	VS
7. Initiate and coordinate with the LGUs and NGAs the development of regional and special poverty development projects	3.42	4.35	4.18	3.82	VS
8. Initiate and coordinate with the LGUs and NGAs the funding and implementation of regional and special poverty development projects.	3.44	4.18	4.24	3.78	VS
<b>SUB MEAN</b>	3.44	4.29	4.15	3.80	VS
<b>BUDGETING</b>					
1. Advocate the mobilization of funds by LGUs and NGAs to fund social reform and poverty programs	3.18	4.25	3.94	3.62	VS
2. Advocate the mobilization of funds to finance capability building for the NGOs	3.06	4.06	3.76	3.47	VS
3. Review the annual poverty reduction budgets of NGAs, SUCs and special development authorities	3.00	4.22	3.76	3.49	VS
4. Endorse to the NAPC the annual budgets of NGAs, SUCs and special development authorities	3.01	4.08	3.71	3.45	VS
<b>SUB MEAN</b>	3.06	4.15	3.79	3.51	VS
<b>MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>					
1. Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs undertaken by NGAs, GOCCs and special development authorities in the region	3.24	4.22	4.12	3.67	VS
2. Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of poverty alleviation projects undertaken by the LGUs and SUCs	3.21	4.16	4.06	3.62	VS
<b>SUB MEAN</b>	3.23	4.19	4.09	3.65	VS
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: LGU : Local Government Units  
 RLA : Regional Line Agencies  
 PS : Private Sector  
 DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
 VS : Very Satisfactory

**Table 4:** Degree of Fulfillment of Responsibilities of the RKCG

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RKCG	LGU	RLA	PS	MEAN	DE
1. Mobilization of NGAs, NGOs or entities such as the Local Poverty Reduction Action Officer	4.20	4.47	4.29	4.30	VHF
2. Mobilization of Cabinet Officer for Regional Development (CORD) to facilitate resolution of RKCG matters that need cabinet action	3.82	4.43	4.06	4.05	HF
3. Recognition and coordination with focal persons, teams, and/or committees that LGUs may	4.28	4.51	4.41	4.37	VHF
4. Enhancement of basic sector participation especially the NAPC sectoral council members	4.04	4.37	4.24	4.17	HF
5. Coordination with the concerned LGUs and local civil society groups	4.39	4.45	4.59	4.43	VHF
6. Close collaboration with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the PNP	4.42	4.49	4.53	4.46	VHF
7. Formulation and approval of internal rules regarding the conduct of regular and special meeting	4.01	4.33	4.24	4.14	HF
8. Screening of NGOs and other civil society groups interested in RKCG membership and participation in KALAH-I-related activities	4.09	4.29	3.94	4.14	HF
9. Conduct periodic review and assessment of RCKG programs, projects and activities	3.92	4.31	4.18	4.08	HF
10. Preparation and submission of reports to the National Anti Poverty Commission	3.91	4.41	4.29	4.12	HF
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>VHF</b>

Legend: LGU : Local Government Units  
 RLA : Regional Line Agencies  
 PS : Private Sector

DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
 VHF : Very Highly Fulfilled  
 HF : Highly Fulfilled

It has to be noted that the objective of this study is not to dwell on the inadequacies of the RKCG. It attempts to identify these to come up with alternatives so as to help the organization develop and improve along with the continuously changing stakeholders' demands.

A perusal of the table also reveals that among the three groups of respondents, the RLAs registered the highest mean score of 4.41, followed by the PS with 4.28 and by the LGUs with 4.11. This result suggests that the RKCG is effective in providing capacity building at the different regional offices. The low rating by the LGU shows that while capacity development of RLAs was satisfactorily carried out, some members of the RKCG were neglected. Likewise in the study of Balisacan (2000), it was found out that the involvement of the LGU implementers in the planning stage was neglected as planning was done at the regional level and not in the local level.

A further analysis on the responses of the LGUs (Appendix I) reveals that the highest rating was given

by the provincial level. It has to be noted that the provincial level is considered as the fulcrum of development between the regional and municipal levels. Thus, it can be said that its position is strategically identified to localize nationally formulated poverty reduction program. The RKCG, on the other hand, has always ensured that the provinces are involved in the policy formulation of KALAH-I in the region. This is primarily done to allow the provinces to influence the policy direction of the KALAH-I because of their connection with the KALAH-I target municipalities. The low ratings given by the municipalities and the barangays show that although the RKCG was envisioned as a mechanism for the national and local leaders to work together for poverty reduction, in practice, coordination is only strong vertically and weak horizontally, as the participation of beneficiaries/partners at the local level has been neglected. As most LGU implementers commented, the roles of implementers and service providers and the beneficiaries were not properly defined and most of the intended beneficiaries were not fully aware of the program.

This finding affirms the study of Bautista (1993) which states that the RDC has generally been lacking in coordinative capacity which severely limits its effectiveness in regional planning and implementation. Moreover, the intrusion of politics into administrative matters and incertitude regarding governmental intentions were also recognized by the respondents as factors that deter the RKCG in coordinating with the LGUs.

#### **Extent of Collaboration of PS, RLAs and LGUs** **Extent of Collaboration of the Private Sector**

The data gathered from the private sector are presented in Table 5. The result of the study showed that the extent of collaboration of the private sector in the implementation of the KALAH Program at the regional level is very strong. This implies that the private sector in general is logically adept towards activities that immediately address the concerns on poverty alleviation.

Accordingly, the sector with the highest rating is livelihood and employment with 4.22 mean score interpreted as extremely strong.

It was noted that most of the PS members of the RKCG are engaged in micro-financing and cooperatives, these are: Nueva Segovia Consortium Cooperatives of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Galimuyod Savings and Development Cooperatives of Galimuyod, Ilocos Sur, Gulf Bank (Rural Bank of Lingayen, Inc.) of Lingayen, Pangasinan, Regional Cooperative Development Bank of Ilocos Sur, Cooperative Development Bank of Urdaneta, Pangasinan, and Integrated Small Fishpond Owner and Lessees Multi-Purpose Cooperative of Binmaley, Pangasinan.

In a study conducted by Pacturan (1996), it was found out that the first four of the 10 topmost development concerns of NGOs/POs that directly address concerns on poverty alleviation are enterprise development, agriculture, environment and basic social services.

In line with the national government's thrust to localize the MDGs particularly on poverty reduction, this finding only shows that Region 1 through the initiative of the RDC-RKCG in collaboration with the private sector is undertaking significant strides in terms of institutional arrangements to advocate and implement programs and projects to attain the MDG targets for the region and the country.

It also shows that the private sectors are also committed in achieving the government's 10 point agenda in alleviating poverty through the provision of livelihood and employment opportunities for marginalized group through community enterprise and skills training.

The low rating given to the other areas of the KALAH program only reveal that the private sectors only manifest minimal concerns to those projects where they are not involved.

A perusal of the measures of collaboration and from the point of view of the private sectors reveal that a healthy tripartite partnership and collaboration among the members of the RKCG is mostly visible in providing technical assistance and capability building to the Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Teams (PPRATs) and in the formulation of policy recommendations for poverty reduction. This shows that indeed, capability-building is a major component in poverty alleviation projects or activities. In almost all of the PS respondents of this study, it was seen that capability building through training, social preparation, community-based organizing, and other human resources development interventions are crucial in the success of the PS projects geared towards poverty alleviation.

In terms of the formulation of policy recommendations for poverty reduction, it was noted that at the regional level, the RKCG formulates policy recommendations and provides the legal mandate to the program in the form of resolutions. The RKCG which was already formed are also composed of the heads of line agencies, LGUs and PS representatives (NAPC, 2003).

In an interview with the private sectors, the PS respondents claimed that at the provincial level the institutional requirements of program implementation were already established. However, at the municipal level, there is still a need to institutionalize these arrangements. The following constraints were commonly encountered by the PS in implementing poverty reduction activities. (1) The participation of the basic sectors in the KALAH was not yet fully institutionalized at all levels. Their involvement is very minimal. This is ironic in view of the objectives of this programme to focus on the basic sectors; (2) There is a need to institutionalize active participation of private sectors at the municipal level; (3) Representatives of key government line agencies who attended the appreciation stage did not attend anymore the succeeding stages of the KALAH development projects. There is discontinuity of representatives. Usually subordinates who cannot make decisions are the ones who attend these meetings; (4) Private sectors withdraw from the program because they do not want to succumb to the pressures exerted by local politicians; (5) the government lacks effective support into its agrarian reform programme especially in the provision of farming technologies and funding for enterprise projects (i.e. credit and marketing) of the farmer beneficiaries. (6) Private sectors are hardly notified

**Table 5:** Extent of Collaboration of the Private Sector in the Implementation of the KALAH I Program

MEASURES OF COLLABORATION	AR	HDS	SP	LE	ICB	MEAN	DE
1. Integrate the Poverty reduction plans and programs of provincial governments, line agencies, SUCs, basic sectors in the regional poverty reduction plan.	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.14	4.00	4.00	VS
2. Provide policy guidelines and direction of poverty initiatives at the local levels.	4.50	4.33	4.00	4.29	4.00	4.25	ES
3. Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team.	4.50	4.33	4.50	4.29	4.50	4.38	ES
4. Ensure the convergence of national government efforts for poverty reduction.	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.29	4.00	4.19	VS
5. Augment local resources.	4.00	3.67	3.50	4.00	3.50	3.81	VS
6. Develop systems and strategies for the localization of poverty reduction programs.	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.14	4.00	4.00	VS
7. Review, prioritize and endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs/budgets of the region for funding & implementation.	4.50	4.33	4.00	4.29	4.50	4.31	ES
8. Monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program.	3.50	4.33	4.00	4.29	4.50	4.19	VS
9. Formulate policy recommendations for poverty reduction.	4.50	4.33	4.50	4.29	4.50	4.38	ES
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: AR : Asset Reform  
HDS : Human Development Services  
SP : Social Protection  
LE : Livelihood and Employment

ICB : Institutionalization and Capacity-Building  
DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
ES : Extremely Strong  
VS : Very Strong

on the progress of the projects implemented. These problems were some of the reasons why some NGOs/POs who were interviewed claimed that they are no longer active members of the RKCG. Accordingly, while the NGOs continue to render their services to the needy, such activities they claimed are no longer tied up with the RKCG. The lack of interest of the NGOs in the program is evidenced by the very few NGOs who have attended the quarterly meeting conducted by the RKCG as reflected on the RKCG Accomplishment Report for 2008. (Appendix O).

#### **Extent of Collaboration of the Regional Line Agencies**

The data gathered from the regional line agencies are presented in Table 6. The result of the study showed that the extent of collaboration of the RLAs in the implementation of the KALAH I Program at the regional level was extremely strong. This implies that the RLAs have developed synergy among the poverty reduction program (PRP) stakeholders through appropriate networks and linkages. It shows that the objectives and activities of the KALAH I program are properly disseminated to the concerned agencies; thus, they were able to realign their priorities in line with the overall goals and objectives of the program. It could also mean that there is a

smooth relationship between and among the PRP stakeholders particularly the program implementers. UNDP and ACSPPA (2003) advocate for synergy among various program stakeholders through appropriate linkages. Accordingly, linkages can be affected through the various levels of government in the form of vertical coordination or among the sectors themselves in one administrative level in the form horizontal coordination.

Further, the sector with the highest rating was the Health Development Services with mean rating of 4.22 interpreted as extremely strong. The least rating of 4.17 was given to asset reform.

It is worth mentioning that as program implementers, the RLAs spearhead the implementation of the KALAH I program; the participation of the line agencies is therefore limited to the implementation stage and they do not have a program or project focused on the beneficiaries alone. Their services are based on their respective agency's general programs and projects. Thus, their participation is focused on advocacy or information dissemination of their services and they cannot commit any tangible project beyond the dictates of their office functions and financial resources (Miguel, 2005).

**Table 6:** Extent of Collaboration of the Regional Line Agencies in the Implementation of the KALAH I Program

MEASURES OF COLLABORATION	AR	HDS	SP	LE	ICB	MEAN	DE
1. Integrate the Poverty reduction plans and programs of provincial governments, line agencies, SUCs, basic sectors in the regional poverty reduction plan.	4.14	4.21	4.20	4.18	4.21	4.19	VS
2. Provide policy guidelines and direction of poverty initiatives at the local levels.	4.21	4.37	4.27	4.24	4.21	4.27	ES
3. Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team.	4.21	4.32	4.27	4.29	4.36	4.29	ES
4. Ensure the convergence of national government efforts for poverty reduction.	4.14	4.26	4.13	4.18	4.29	4.20	ES
5. Augment local resources.	3.93	3.95	4.00	4.12	4.14	4.03	VS
6. Develop systems and strategies for the localization of poverty reduction programs.	4.21	4.26	4.27	4.24	4.29	4.25	ES
7. Review, prioritize and endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs/budgets of the region for funding & implementation.	4.29	4.21	4.13	4.12	4.14	4.18	VS
8. Monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program.	4.14	4.16	4.20	4.18	4.07	4.15	VS
9. Formulate policy recommendations for poverty reduction.	4.29	4.26	4.13	4.24	4.21	4.23	ES
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>4.18</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>ES</b>

Legend: AR : Asset Reform

HDS : Human Development Services

SP : Social Protection

LE : Livelihood and Employment

ICB : Institutionalization and Capacity-Building

DE : Descriptive Equivalent

ES : Extremely Strong

VS : Very Strong

It was noted that among the three groups of respondents, the regional line agencies gave the highest mean score in the extent of collaboration. This manifests the strong commitment and support of the RLAs to the poverty reduction program of the government.

#### **Extent of Collaboration of the Provincial Government**

Table 7 presents the extent of collaboration of the Provincial Government in the implementation of the KALAH I Program.

Considering the overall mean score of 3.89, it can be construed that generally the extent of collaboration of the Provincial Government in the implementation of poverty reduction program is very strong. This implies that the impact of convergence efforts in the fight against poverty is also felt at the provincial level.

The result of this study is evidence that the provincial LGUs have formulated their development plans and investment programs in line with the medium-term regional development plan (MTRDP) which is in consonance with the nationally formulated

development plan of the country. It also attests to the fact that the provinces have made considerable efforts to integrate the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into their local development plans thru adoption of local policies and programs to facilitate the achievement of MDGs.

Moreover, it affirms the commitment of the provinces in ensuring consistency and complementation of delivery of social services by improving its coordination within and among government and non government agencies.

Accordingly, all four (4) provincial governments of Region I claimed that they have rendered services in the five sectors of the KALAH I Program as KALAH I poverty reduction programs at the provincial level are integrated in their provincial development plan. As noted, the provincial governments rated high in Asset Reform with a mean rating of 4.06 interpreted as very strong. This implies that most of the projects or services provided by the provincial LGUs to the poor are those which are rendered in terms of capital and infrastructure provision, agrarian reform, farm equipment and machinery provision, and seedling and fingerling dispersal.

**Table 7:** Extent of Collaboration of the Provincial Government in the Implementation of the KALAHI Program

MEASURES OF COLLABORATION	AR	HDS	SP	LE	ICB	MEAN	DE
1. Organize Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Team (PPRAT).	4.22	4.26	4.26	4.22	4.09	4.21	ES
2. Prepare Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program based on the municipality action plans.	3.69	3.35	3.22	3.43	2.96	3.33	VS
3. Provide technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction projects.	4.26	4.43	4.13	4.04	4.35	4.24	ES
4. Implement poverty reduction programs and projects.	4.26	3.96	4.09	4.00	4.00	4.06	VS
5. Mobilize resources from public, private, national and international sources to complement available resources.	3.95	4.04	3.69	3.96	4.13	3.95	VS
6. Consolidate municipal data on poverty reduction.	3.65	3.87	3.78	3.09	3.48	3.57	VS
7. Process and analyze data for provincial level diagnosis.	4.22	3.78	3.96	3.35	3.87	3.84	VS
8. Prepare and submit report to the Provincial Development Council, DILG and RKCG	4.22	3.61	3.87	3.96	3.74	3.88	VS
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>3.91</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: AR : Asset Reform  
HDS : Human Development Services  
SP : Social Protection  
LE : Livelihood and Employment

ICB : Institutionalization and Capacity-Building  
DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
ES : Extremely Strong  
VS : Very Strong

It has to be noted that the services that the provincial LGUs render generally come in the form of granting financial assistance which is most of the time subject to the availability of funds. Moreover, projects that require large amounts of money are channeled to other sources of funding, since funds are already programmed by the provincial government for the fiscal year. Accordingly, such processes delay the implementation of programs and projects in the municipalities and barangays (Miguel, 2005).

In an interview with the focal persons of KALAHI at the provincial level, it was admitted that most of the content of the provincial poverty reduction action plan/program (PPRAP) were based only on past action plans of the province as most municipalities do not submit their own action plans which should be the basis of the PPRAP. Furthermore, while provincial level diagnosis on poverty reduction is being conducted, the result is only applicable to a few municipalities since only a few submit their municipal data on poverty reduction for consolidation and analysis.

In an interview with the municipal focal persons, it was admitted that they seldom and sometimes do not submit their poverty reduction action plan to the

provincial government because although the provincial governments provide technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction projects, the mechanisms of consultation and multi-level cooperation at the LGU level is sometimes set aside. They claimed that some projects of the KALAHI have been already programmed without consulting the municipalities and the barangays as intended beneficiaries; thus the implemented projects are put to waste as they do not respond to the needs of the barangay beneficiaries. In the study of Miguel (2005), she stated that some projects are not the priority projects based on the Barangay Development Plan.

Finally, some municipalities who are identified as KALAHI sites cannot accept that they are poor because of the stigma attached to the word "poor". As such, cooperation and coordination with these LGUs in improving their conditions is neglected. The moderate appreciation of the municipalities in the KALAHI signifies the need to intensify KALAHI information dissemination and coordination at the local levels to make a deeper impact on the lives of the people at the grassroots, which is the actual battleground of the poverty eradication efforts.



**Table 8:** Extent of Collaboration of the Municipal Government in the Implementation of the KALAH I Program

MEASURES OF COLLABORATION	AR	HDS	SP	LE	ICB	MEAN	DE
1. Organize Municipal Poverty Reduction Action Team (MPRAT).	3.48	3.48	3.35	3.54	3.33	3.44	VS
2. Consolidate and aggregate barangay	3.43	3.59	3.54	3.50	3.40	3.49	VS
3. Process and analyze data for municipal level diagnosis.	3.50	3.62	3.49	3.50	3.47	3.52	VS
4. Consolidation of Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plans.	3.31	3.33	3.09	3.24	3.16	3.23	MS
5. Preparation of Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans.	3.68	3.56	3.38	3.56	3.37	3.52	VS
6. Identification of target/priority barangays or poverty groups.	3.65	3.75	3.51	3.62	3.41	3.59	VS
7. Facilitate community participation in local governance through dialogues and consultation.	3.62	3.75	3.59	3.69	3.51	3.63	VS
8. Draw support from regional agencies and private institutions in resource mobilization.	3.57	3.69	3.53	3.46	3.32	3.51	VS
9. Provide goods and services based on MBN/LPRAP Surveys.	3.57	3.66	3.65	3.73	3.56	3.63	VS
10. Provide technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction programs and projects	3.81	3.96	3.8	3.87	3.59	3.81	VS
11. Provide capacity-building activities.	3.85	3.95	3.85	3.90	3.73	3.86	VS
12. Track the extent of unmet minimum basic needs of families and communities.	3.30	3.37	3.17	3.29	3.20	3.27	MS
13. Consolidate, process, and analyze the barangay monitoring reports.	3.31	3.31	3.11	3.24	3.21	3.24	MS
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: AR : Asset Reform  
HDS : Human Development Services  
SP : Social Protection  
LE : Livelihood and Employment

ICB : Institutionalization and Capacity-Building  
DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
VS : Very Strong  
MS : Moderately Strong

### Extent of Collaboration of the Municipal Government

The study shows that the extent of collaboration of the municipal level in the implementation of poverty alleviation program is 3.52 interpreted as very strong. This implies that the municipal LGUs are taking the fight against poverty seriously. It also implies the presence of coordination among the different local government units in providing social services to the LGU constituents.

All the 19 municipal governments claimed to have rendered services in the five sectors of the KALAH I Program. This means that along with other local priorities, the municipal LGUs have realigned their programs, projects and activities and budgetary allocation for basic social services. Based on a study by Pascual (2003) in municipalities, basic social services on the average accounted for 15 percent of total spending between 1997 and 2001. The data also revealed that there was a positive relationship between basic social services spending ratio and

income level. The ratio for the richest group of municipalities stood at 22 percent, which dropped to 14 percent for second class municipalities and declined to a measly five percent for the poorest municipalities.

Based also on the study of Pascual (2003), local government spending has a positive impact on the provision of public health services particularly availed by relatively poor constituents. This confirms previous results indicating that the poor are the predominant users of public services. This underscores the need to encourage local governments to reallocate resources toward basic services.

The high rating of the municipal governments is also a manifestation that they have already recognized the need for integrated approaches in addressing the multi-dimensional nature of poverty by attending to Human Development Concerns, Asset Reform, Social Protection and Livelihood and Employment. As noted, however, the municipal governments were rated high in Human Development Services with mean rating of 4.18 interpreted as very strong.

**Table 9:** Extent of Collaboration of the Barangays in the Implementation of the KALAHI Program

MEASURES OF COLLABORATION	AR	HDS	SP	LE	ICB	MEAN	DE
1. Organize Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Team (BPRAT)	3.34	3.39	3.26	3.33	3.23	3.31	MS
2. Consolidate data at the household level.	3.68	3.90	3.47	3.58	3.39	3.61	VS
3. Process and analyze data for barangay-level diagnosis.	3.60	3.67	3.44	3.55	3.43	3.54	VS
4. Validate Data through community assembly.	3.62	3.79	3.43	3.62	3.45	3.59	VS
5. Prepare Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program.	2.99	3.33	3.10	3.26	3.19	3.18	MS
6. Installation of MBN-CBIS.	3.64	3.58	3.45	3.44	3.37	3.50	VS
7. Identify the poor in their respective areas.	3.76	3.78	3.68	3.70	3.45	3.67	VS
8. Track the extent of unmet minimum basis needs of families and communities.	3.18	3.50	3.28	3.35	3.25	3.31	MS
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: AR : Asset Reform  
HDS : Human Development Services  
SP : Social Protection  
LE : Livelihood and Employment

ICB : Institutionalization and Capacity-Building  
DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
VS : Very Strong  
MS : Moderately Strong

The high rating on Human Development Services implies that the municipal LGUs render projects and programs that provide a decent way of living through enhanced access to basic services such as health and sanitation, education, electrification, water and housing. However, the municipal governments should provide the poor with venues for participation in decision-making and management processes as evidenced by the low rating given to institutionalization and capacity-building.

A further analysis of the indicators reveals that the collaboration at the municipal level was high in providing technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction projects and programs and in providing capacity-building activities in the barangays.

However, a weak collaboration was seen in the consolidation of Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plan and in the processing and analysis of barangay monitoring reports. In an interview with the focal persons of KALAHI at the municipal level, it was admitted that most of the barangays identified as KALAHI sites did not have an updated Barangay Development Plan and only very few of them have satisfied the requirement of creating a Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plan. It was also revealed that while some barangays have established their own poverty reduction action teams, majority of them were no longer active or functional. It is worth mentioning that some barangay chairpersons admitted that they lacked the necessary expertise,

knowledge and skills in making BPRAP and monitoring reports.

Furthermore, while the municipal poverty reduction action teams consolidated and aggregated barangay data on poverty reduction for municipal level diagnosis, it was admitted that the gathered data from the barangay did not provide the accurate situation in the barangay as the listed concerns of the barangays have been long standing issues. According to the municipal respondents most programs/projects of the barangays were not carefully planned and identified since the idea of what project should be deliberated upon by the barangay council was based on the perceptions of the Barangay Chairpersons.

#### Extent of Collaboration of the Barangays

Table 9 exhibits the extent of collaboration of the barangays in the implementation of the KALAHI program with 3.46 interpreted as very strong.

All the 61 barangay respondents claimed to have benefited from the services rendered by the KALAHI Program particularly on Human Development Services, Asset Reform, Livelihood and Employment and Social Protection. As noted however, the barangays were rated high in Human Development Services and the lowest mean rating was given to Institutionalization and Capacity-Building.

Based on the assessment of the barangays on the implementation of the KALAHI programs and projects (Appendix J), the following findings were revealed: The KALAHI implementers adopted

various modes in serving communities. (a) In 61 barangays in 19 municipalities, infrastructure projects have been installed. The various projects include infrastructure development of the following: water systems for safe and potable water in far-flung areas; farm to market roads to facilitate transport and marketing of farm products; barangay electrification; footbridges for residents in mountainous areas; and public markets for easy market access. In other barangays, daycare centers for access to education, barangay health centers for free health services, pump irrigation for increased productivity of farmers, low cost subsidized housing, and flood control systems to prevent crop damage in easily flooded areas were provided to the identified KALAHÍ sites. (b) All the respondents claimed that priority intervention was also received by the barangays in terms of providing opportunities through the following: animal dispersal to beef up farmers' income; agro-forestry to create livelihood and optimize use of idle lands for farmers; access to credit facilities as well as other microfinance services, fish culture to generate livelihood; and provision of entrepreneurial training (c) Intervention also manifested provision of social welfare and assistance and social security that have reduced risks arising from incidents as violence, illness, disability, resettlement and harvest failure, and safety nets that mitigate adverse impact of disasters and calamities.

In an interview with the barangay respondents, it was admitted that data at the household level is being consolidated and validated through barangay assembly. The same data are also processed and analyzed for barangay-level diagnosis. Accordingly, while the poor in their respective areas were identified, the barangays still experienced difficulty in tracking the extent of their unmet needs because of the absence or inactive Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Team (BPRAT). It was observed that there was a minimal effort on the part of the barangay councils to get all the data needed for poverty reduction analysis as there were no adequate resources and facilities in the barangays. This may also be the reason for the absence of barangay development plans or action plans in some of the barangay respondents.

Moreover, it was admitted that the absence of a functional BPRATS and barangay poverty reduction action plan could be attributed to the lack of expertise of program managers at the municipal level as well as their local poverty action officers.

It was revealed that most of the barangay respondents were not very much informed about the anti-poverty program of the government. It was admitted that the availability of accurate and up-to-date information about poverty in the community is lacking. This is

evidenced by the very limited data boards in the communities where pertinent information about the program should be posted. This finding affirms the study of Atawe (2006) when she said that information dissemination efforts have not really filtered down to the people at the local level.

This could be attributed to the distance of the barangays from the municipal centers. Many of the identified KALAHÍ sites are found in the mountainous areas. Poor infrastructure facilities particularly roads, bridges, and communication can be barriers to transmission of relevant information from the municipalities to the barangays and vice versa. It should be noted that a well-informed society is essential in getting stakeholders' participation; thus, contributing to the success of the program. Attridge (2002) opines that transparency entails the free flow of low cost information that is understandable, reliable, and timely which may include the extent to which the information is publicly available regarding services, policies and planning arrangements at all levels.

Considering the overall responses of the LGUs, the full involvement of the LGUs is very evident in the poverty reduction efforts of the region. Noticeably, the LGUs as frontline responsible institutions in responding to the increasing service delivery requirements of their constituents are continuously performing their functions in the formulation, implementation, coordination and monitoring of poverty alleviation efforts. This attests to the fact that the LGUs have made considerable efforts to integrate the KALAHÍ program into their local development plans thru adoption of local policies and programs and the allocation of larger proportion of local resources on basic social services – education, health, water, nutrition and so on- that directly stimulate economic growth and also directly impact on human development. However, a low level of capacity and performance in responding to poverty challenges still exist because of their very limited resources and weak KALAHÍ governance structure.

#### **Summary on the Extent of Collaboration per Program**

Table 10 presents the summary on the extent of collaboration of the RKCG members per program. As can be gleaned from the table, the highest mean rating of 3.75 was given to human development services. This implies that most of the programs that were implemented to the targeted KALAHÍ sites were aimed at providing the poor with a decent way of living through enhanced access to basic services such as education, health and sanitation, water, housing and electrification.

**Table 10:** Summary on the Extent of Collaboration by Program

AREAS OF COLLABORATION	LGU	RLA	PS	MEAN	DE
1. Asset Reform	3.51	4.17	4.11	3.61	VS
2. Human Developmental Services	3.63	4.22	4.15	3.75	VS
3. Social Protection	3.44	4.18	4.06	3.59	VS
4. Livelihood and Employment	3.51	4.20	4.22	3.66	VS
5. Institutionalization and Capacity Building	3.38	4.21	4.17	3.51	VS
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>3.49</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>VS</b>

Legend: LGU : Local Government Units  
 RLA : Regional Line Agencies  
 PS : Private Sector  
 DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
 VS : Very Strong

The finding of this study affirms the result of the study of Manasan (2002), when he said that a significant chunk of public spending is reallocated in favor of basic services in education, health care, reproductive health, nutrition, social welfare, low cost water supply and sanitation. Accordingly, among the basic social services, health and sanitation accounts 45-89 percent of public spending, followed by education with 6-42 percent, water and sanitation and family planning accounted for barely 12 percent.

The low mean rating given to institutionalization and capacity building only shows that the participation of the stakeholders in governance is still weak; thus, it has to be strengthened. The RKCG should therefore open more venues for participation in decision-making and management processes of the KALAH program.

#### **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

Tables 11 to 17 present in detail the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the KALAH program in Region 1. Table 12 reveals that the strengths in the implementation of the KALAH program lies in the fulfillment of responsibilities of the Regional KALAH Convergence Group. However, there were still specific activities under this category that were found to be weaknesses and therefore needs to be strengthened.

The weaknesses identified are the functions of the RKCG under the areas of planning, investment

programming, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, weak points were also noted in the process of collaboration of Local government units, regional line agencies and non-government organizations in the implementation of the KALAH program in Region 1.

#### **SWOT on the Functional Performance of the RKCG**

A thorough perusal of Table 11 shows that all the indicators under the functional performance of the RKCG were considered weaknesses.

While the very satisfactory functional performance of the RKCG is an indication of the commitment and full involvement of the three groups in the KALAH program of the region, data shows that the RKCG still needs to come up with better mechanisms to develop networks and linkages with other institutions. It should devise ways and means to attain poverty reduction program targets despite constraints by improving the governance structure of the KALAH program at the LGU level. It should continue providing capacity-building focused on provincial LGUs as the principal delivery mechanisms. Moreover, the RKCG should also continue empowering the LGUs particularly the Municipalities and the Barangays to effectively manage their own poverty reduction program.

The identified weaknesses in the areas of budgeting are indications that the RKCG has not aggressively pursued resource generation and mobilization for poverty reduction program

**Table 11:** SWOT on the Functional Performance of the RKCG

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<b>PLANNING</b>	<p>Coordinate the implementation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs</p> <p>Coordinate the formulation of policy recommendations for poverty reduction</p> <p>Assist local government units in the preparation of local poverty alleviation plans and programs</p> <p>Integrate approved poverty reduction plans and programs of GOCCs, and special development authorities into the regional poverty reduction plans</p> <p>Coordinate the preparation of regional poverty alleviation plans</p> <p>Integrate approved poverty reduction plans and programs of LGUs, NGAs, and SUCs into the regional poverty plans</p> <p>Coordinate the preparation of regional poverty alleviation investment programs</p>	<p>Creation of appropriate structures and mechanisms and linkages to respond to the needs of the KALAHI sites</p> <p>Continue empowering the municipalities and the barangays to effectively manage their PRP</p> <p>Continue providing capacity-building focused on provincial LGUs</p>	<p>changes on PRP policies brought about by change in political leadership</p>
<b>INVESTMENT PROGRAMMING</b>	<p>Review and prioritize poverty reduction-related national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation</p> <p>Endorse poverty reduction-related national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation</p> <p>Review poverty reduction investment programs for funding and implementation</p> <p>Prioritize poverty reduction investment programs for funding and implementation</p> <p>Initiate and coordinate with the LGUs and NGAs the development of regional and special poverty development projects</p>	<p>Joint undertaking between NGOs and GOs in project identification</p> <p>Continuously policy advocacy activities</p>	<p>Bureaucratic culture on patronage system</p>

**Table 11:** SWOT on the Functional Performance of the RKCG (Continued)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<b>INVESTMENT PROGRAMMING</b>	<p>Initiate and coordinate with the LGUs and NGAs the funding and implementation of regional and special poverty development projects</p> <p>Endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs.</p> <p>Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments</p>		<p>Low level of skills in leadership, organizing, networking and facilitating</p> <p>Lack of funding support</p>
<b>BUDGETING</b>	<p>Advocate the mobilization of funds by LGUs and NGAs to fund social reform and poverty programs.</p> <p>Review the annual poverty reduction budgets of NGAs, SUCs and special development authorities</p> <p>Advocate the mobilization of funds to finance capability building for the NGOs</p> <p>Endorse to the NAPC the annual poverty reduction budgets of NGAs, SUCs and special development authorities</p>	<p>Incentive system to encourage public-private partnerships in poverty reduction program</p> <p>NGOs to capacitated themselves in project proposal generation, implementation and management in order to utilize effectively fund allocation.</p>	<p>Dependence on leaders of higher government levels for resource accessing</p> <p>Lack of community representatives/ public participation</p>
<b>MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>	<p>Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs undertaken by the NGAs, GOCCs and special development authorities in the region</p> <p>Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of regional poverty alleviation plans and investment programs undertaken by the LGUS and SUCs.</p>	<p>Conduct of impact evaluation research and studies</p> <p>Documentation of poverty reduction best practices for policy reform proposals</p> <p>Technical support for local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning</p> <p>NGOs to monitor Government agencies (RLAs and LGUs) in localizing KALAH I program; act as watchdog or policy implementation advocates</p>	<p>Lack of skills in scaling-up or replication</p> <p>Weak Barangay governance structure</p>

To strengthen this, the possibility of implementing an incentive system was seen as an opportunity to encourage public-private partnerships in poverty reduction programs. Continuous policy advocacy activities should also be considered. Furthermore, the RKCG should make it a point that all the stakeholders are involved in poverty reduction program from situational analysis, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through a joint undertaking between NGOs and governments in project identification for them to realize the necessity of a joint sharing of resources, financial and otherwise, in the implementation of the program. Another opportunity is by capacitating NGOs in project proposal generation, implementation and management in order to utilize effectively fund allocations under the Poverty Alleviation Fund.

The weaknesses seen in the area of monitoring and evaluation is a manifestation that the RKCG has not yet installed a well-defined process of measuring the outputs of the program. To this end, the pursuance of impact evaluation research is seen as an opportunity to determine the effectiveness and impact of the KALAH program to the KALAH sites and to gauge the functionality of the local poverty reduction structures. Documentation of poverty reduction best practices should also be conducted for improved delivery of basic services by replicating award-winning innovations of other LGUs in providing effective and efficient services to their constituents. Moreover, technical support for the institutionalization of a local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning and tracking down resources for poverty projects should be provided.

The change in political leadership which oftentimes results to changes in policies and program priorities is seen as a threat to this area. This implies the need to further institutionalize poverty reduction program in the LGUs and to strengthen existing organizational mechanisms to ensure continuity and sustainability of the program notwithstanding changes in political leadership. Others include lack of experience in working with other sectors, low level of skills in leadership, organizing, networking and facilitating bureaucratic culture on patronage system, lack of skills in scaling-up or replication and lack of funding support.

#### **SWOT on the Responsibilities of the RKCG**

The identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are listed in Table 12. A thorough perusal of Table 12 shows that almost all the indicators are weaknesses and only three indicators were considered strengths. It is worth mentioning however, that all the strengths of the RKCG under this category focused on coordination and collaboration with the LGUs, local civil society, AFP and the PNP. This implies the

presence of linkages and networking for complementation of programs and activities in the KALAH program.

The highly fulfilled responsibilities of the RKCG showcased the presence of organizational mechanism or structure for program coordination and management. It also shows the presence of a secretariat that can provide administrative support and technical back-up in the performance of its duties and responsibilities.

In strengthening these identified weaknesses, the following opportunities can be considered: (1) conduct of continuing organization development along leadership training, project planning, implementation and monitoring; (2) conduct of regular assessment and monitoring of performance both at organizational and project levels; and (3) conduct of additional trainings/capability building for members, officers and secretariat.

Threats exist, however, such as, (1) inavailability of funds for operational purposes; (2) unhealthy competition among members; (3) value of patronage system over merit and (4) failure and refusal to coordinate/complement programs.

#### **SWOT on the Extent of Collaboration**

##### **Collaboration of the PS in the KALAH Program**

Table 13 lays out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats on the collaboration of PS in the poverty reduction program.

As perceived by the private sector, the RKCG manifested a strong leadership in providing policy guidelines, technical assistance, capability building and in formulating policy recommendations for poverty reduction. This is an evidence of the presence of inter-sectoral partnerships in the KALAH program where the RKCG also provides support mechanisms to the civil society groups.

Weak points were identified in the following: (a) integration of poverty reduction plans and programs of the LGUs, RLAs and PS (b) convergence and augmentation of local resources and (c) development of systems and strategies for the localization of the KALAH program. These weaknesses limit the private sector to perform its functional role as implementing agencies or service delivery agents.

In terms of resources, the private sectors particularly the NGOs are predominantly dependent on external funding. However, no records or estimates are available regarding the aggregate amount of funding coursed to NGOs. Limited studies, however, suggest that most NGOs operate on relatively small budgets. Grants are the main source of funding, covering 70-100 percent of administrative and program budgets. NGOs also tap several funding agencies.

**Table 12:** SWOT on the Fulfillment of Responsibilities of the RKCG.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Close collaboration with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the PNP	Enhancement of basic sector participation especially the NAPC sectoral council members	Consolidate NGO participation to enhance NGO constituency and accountability by organizing or strengthening NGO assembly or forum on RDC-RKCG participation	Failure and refusal to coordinate/complement programs
Coordination with the concerned LGUs and local civil society groups	Formulation and approval of internal rules regarding the conduct of regular and special meeting		Value of patronage system over merit
Recognition and coordination with focal persons, teams, and/or committees that LGUs may	Screening of NGOs and other civil society groups interested in RKCG membership and participation in KALAHI-related activities	Expand and intensify NGOs/Pos participation by increasing the number of NGO representatives	Politicized environments
Mobilization of NGAs, NGOs or entities such as the Local Poverty Reduction Action Officer	Conduct periodic review and assessment of RCKG programs, projects and activities	Conduct of continuing organization development along leadership training, project planning, implementation and monitoring	inavailability of funds for operational purposes
	Preparation and submission of reports to the National Anti Poverty Commission	Conduct of regular assessment and monitoring of performance both at organizational and project levels	
	Mobilization of Cabinet Officer for Regional Development (CORD) to facilitate resolution of RKCG matters that need cabinet action	Conduct of additional trainings/capability building for members, officers and secretariat	

The funding cycles of these agencies and the assurance of future funding often determine the ability of NGOs to plan future activities. Most NGOs tend to engage in planning on a yearly basis. Funding tends to be short-term (less than three years) and more often is result-oriented (www.pids.gov.ph, 05 December 2008). This would explain the delays in providing support services by the NGOs.

The following opportunities were identified: (1) to help in the development of systems and strategies for the localization of the KALAHI program, PS can be sources of innovation and experimentation, their skills and expertise in community organizing approaches, local participatory planning systems, resource management, and policy reforms may be used by communities to make them ideal for community organizing; (2) to intensify PS participation, PS must participate actively in the RDC executive committee and mandated RDC

subcommittees. They should also be part of the RDC monitoring and evaluation committee for projects planned and approved by RDC and implemented by respective government agencies (RLAs and LGUs), (3) They should also be part of LGU planning and budgeting not only in social development planning at the local level, and (4) policies may be formulated to provide assistance to the PS in barangay-based activities.

The threats identified along this line are the following: lack of impact evaluations of their work; lack of skills in scaling up and replication; inadequacy of managerial and organizational capabilities; dependence on foreign funding support; dependence on leaders for resource accessing; inadequate second-line leadership capability; attitude towards government; unhealthy competition among PS; unfamiliarity with workings of government, and lack of experience in working with other sectors.



**Table 13: SWOT on the Collaboration of PS in the KALAH I Program.**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team	Monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program	Document and manualize successful NGO experiences for policy reform proposals to government	Lack of impact evaluations of their work; lack of skills in scaling up and replication
Formulate policy recommendations for poverty reduction	Ensure the convergence of national government efforts for poverty reduction	Exchange of expertise, skills and training in community organizing approaches, local participatory planning systems, resource management, and policy reforms	Inadequacy of managerial and organizational capabilities; unhealthy competition among NGO
Review, prioritize and endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs/budgets of the region for funding & implementation	Integrate the Poverty reduction plans and programs of provincial governments, line agencies, SUCs, basic sectors in the regional poverty reduction plan	NGOs to form part actively in the RDC executive committee and mandated RDC sub committees	Attitude towards government; unfamiliarity with workings of government and lack of experience in working with other sectors
Provide policy guidelines and direction of poverty initiatives at the local levels	Develop systems and strategies for the localization of poverty reduction programs	NGOs should form part of LGU planning-budgeting process	
	Augment local resources		Dependence on foreign funding support; dependence on leaders for resource accessing; inadequate second-line leadership capability

### Collaboration of RLAs in the KALAH I Program

The identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in this category are listed in Table 14. As noted, the provision of technical assistance, policy guidelines and capability-building, development of systems and strategies for the localization of the KALAH I program, and the formulation of policy recommendations were considered strengths. This is evident as these are the support mechanisms that the RKCG can provide to the line agencies as active partners in the poverty reduction efforts of the region.

However, collaboration is weak in terms of augmenting local resources and in monitoring the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program. The participation of the line agencies is focused on advocacy of their services and they cannot finance projects beyond the dictates of their financial

resources. To strengthen these weaknesses, the creation of local resource mobilization strategies, continuous policy advocacy activities and the conduct of program evaluation research or studies are seen as opportunities.

The threats identified along this line are (a) inadequate funding support for poverty reduction program; (b) inadequacy of skills and expertise in conducting monitoring and evaluation; and (c) change of political leadership and change of poverty reduction program policies.

### Collaboration of the LGUs in the KALAH I Program

Table 15-17 presents in detail the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats on the extent of collaboration of the LGUs in the implementation of the poverty reduction program.

**Table 14:** SWOT on the Collaboration of RLAs in the KALAHI Program.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team	Integrate the Poverty reduction plans and programs of provincial governments, line agencies, SUCs, basic sectors in the regional poverty reduction plan	Continuously policy advocacy activities	Change of political leadership and change of poverty reduction program policies
Provide policy guidelines and direction of poverty initiatives at the local levels	Review, prioritize and endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs/budgets of the region for funding & implementation		
Develop systems and strategies for the localization of poverty reduction programs.	Monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program	Document and manualize poverty reduction best practices	Inadequacy of skills and expertise in conducting monitoring and evaluation
Formulate policy recommendations for poverty reduction		Conduct of program evaluation research or studies	
Ensure the convergence of national government efforts for poverty reduction	Augment local resources	Creation of local resource mobilization strategies	Inadequate funding support for poverty reduction program

As shown in the tables, the collaboration of the LGUs in the implementation of the KALAHI program is very strong with mean ratings of 3.89, provinces, followed by 3.52 and 3.46 of the municipalities and the barangays. This is an indication of the commitment of the LGUs to reduce poverty in the region. This is also evidence that the LGUs have made considerable efforts in integrating the KALAHI program into their local development plans. As frontline institutions, the LGUs have significant roles to play to realize the poverty reduction efforts. For most part, the achievement of the poverty reduction targets largely depends on the delivery of devolved services.

As provided under the Local Government Code of 1991, local government units assume the primary responsibility for the provision of basic services and facilities and the improvement of the quality of life of their constituents. Likewise the Social Reform and Poverty alleviation Act of 1997 gives the LGUs the frontline role in the fight against poverty. The law tasks the LGUs to be responsible in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the

Anti-Poverty Reduction Agenda within their area of jurisdiction.

However, a perusal of Table 15-17 shows that all the measures of collaboration for the LGUs are considered weaknesses and only two are considered strengths. These weaknesses imply that the LGUs are still wanting in terms of knowledge and skills through interventions such as: (a) advocacy, (b) policy formulation, (c) development of tools and instruments, and (d) documentation of poverty reduction related good practices.

Developing targets or targeting, has been a major weakness of most LGUs as they lack reliable and credible baseline data, particularly poverty statistics. More often than not, LGUs rely on centrally produced data like NSO/NSCB data for their planning ([www.dilg.gov.ph](http://www.dilg.gov.ph), 13 December 2008). These data however are not disaggregated at the municipal government and barangay government level—the lower level LGUs that are primarily at the forefront of policy or program execution—thereby making it difficult for proper targeting and programming.

**Table 15: SWOT on the Collaboration of the Provincial LGUs in the KALAHI Program**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Provide technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction projects		Advocating to local learning institutions mainstream poverty reduction issues in their education and training programs	Inadequate funding
Organize Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Team (PPRAT)		Advocacy efforts at the local levels through distribution of program documents and advocacy materials such as training modules on planning and monitoring	Highly-politicized environment
	Implement poverty reduction programs and projects		Bureaucratic culture of patronage system
	Mobilize resources from public, private, national and international sources to complement available resources	Performance-linked funding facility which serves as an incentive for local capacity building	Change in leadership
	Prepare and submit report to the Provincial Development Council, DILG and RKCG		
	Process and analyze municipal data for provincial level diagnosis	Documented good practices packaged in several forms, CDs, manuals, flyers and brochures should be distributed to all LGU levels	
	Consolidate municipal data on poverty reduction		
	Prepare Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program based on the municipality action plans		

Thus, to answer this problem, the LGUs should be capacitated to institutionalize a local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning and for tracking down resources for poverty projects.

To strengthen the enabling environment for poverty reduction, localization of the following opportunities may be considered: (a) advocacy efforts at the local

levels program documents and advocacy materials such as training modules on planning and monitoring, (b) documented good practices packaged in several forms, CDs, manuals, flyers and brochures should be distributed to all LGU levels, and (c) advocating to local learning institutions mainstream poverty reduction issues in their education and training programs.

**Table 16:** SWOT on the Collaboration of the Municipal LGUs in the KALAH I Program

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	Provide capacity-building activities	Advocating to local learning institutions	
	Provide technical assistance and capacity building	mainstream poverty reduction issues in their education and training programs	
	Provide goods and services based on MBN/LPRAP Surveys		deep-seated biases in service delivery
	Facilitate community participation in local governance through dialogues and consultation	Documented good practices packaged in several forms, CDs, manuals, flyers and brochures should be distributed to all LGU levels	Attitude towards government's programs and projects
	Identification of target/priority barangays or poverty groups		Bureaucratic culture of patronage system
	Preparation of Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans.		Highly-politicized environment
	Process and analyze barangay data for municipal level diagnosis	Advocacy efforts at the local levels program documents and advocacy materials such as training modules on planning and monitoring	
	Draw support from regional agencies and private institutions in resource mobilization		Inadequate funding
	Consolidate, aggregate barangay data		
	Organize Municipal Poverty Reduction Action Team (MPRAT)		Inadequacy policy settings which accounts for weak KALAH I program structure at the local level
	Track the extent of unmet minimum basic needs of families and communities	Capacitated to institutionalize a local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning and tracking down resources for poverty projects	Change in leadership
	Consolidate, process, and analyze the barangay monitoring reports		
	Consolidation of Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plans		

**Table 17: SWOT on the Collaboration of Barangays in the KALAH I Program**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	Identify the poor in their respective areas	Provide assistance in pursuing institutional reforms such as Barangay Governance Reforms	Lack of facilities
	Consolidate data at the household level	Advocacy efforts at the barangays through distribution of program documents and advocacy materials such as training modules on planning and monitoring	Highly-politicized environment
	Validate Data through community assembly. Process and analyze data for barangay-level diagnosis	institutionalization of a local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning	Attitude towards government; and lack of experience in working with other sectors
	Installation of MBN-CBIS		Change in leadership
	Track the extent of unmet minimum basis needs of families and communities. Organize Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Team (BPRAT)	Documented good practices packaged in several forms, CDs, manuals, flyers and brochures should be distributed to all LGU levels	Inadequate funding
	Prepare Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program	reward system that encourages the barangays in improving its service delivery to constituencies	Bureaucratic culture of patronage system deep-seated biases in service delivery
			Lack of leadership capability and Inadequacy of managerial and organizational capabilities Unfamiliarity with program processes

To improve on LGU service delivery standards addressing local poverty issues to promote the pro-poor agenda of the government, the RKCG should assist not only the provinces but also the municipalities and the barangays in developing and institutionalizing local policies and systems supportive of the KALAH I localization efforts such as planning and budgeting and monitoring baseline information and the like. It should likewise support local initiatives in adapting and innovating new methods in social services delivery and encourage LGU exemplars to advocate and promote to other LGUS their good practices.

A performance-linked funding facility is also seen as an opportunity by providing local governments with general purpose development budget support for sustainable local investments in social and economic infrastructure. This support is linked to agreed measures of local performance and serves as an incentive for local capacity building. Along with this, a reward system that encourages the barangays in

improving their service delivery to constituents may also be adopted; hence, addressing priority needs and reducing poverty.

The identified threats along this line are: (a) inadequate policy settings which account for weak KALAH I program structure at the local level. (b) highly-politicized environment; (c) change in leadership; (d) inadequate funding; (e) inadequacy of managerial and governance capability because of limited education; (f) political rivalry; (g) bureaucratic culture of patronage system, and (h) attitude towards government programs and projects.

#### **Status of the KALAH I Program**

The status of the KALAH I program in Region 1 is very satisfactory. This may be attributed to the very satisfactory functional performance, very highly fulfilled responsibilities of the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group, and the very strong collaboration of the stakeholders in the implementation of the poverty reduction program.

**Table 18:** Status of the KALAHI Program

MEASURES OF STATUS	MEAN	DE		
1. Functional Performance	3.69	Very Satisfactory		
2. Responsibilities	4.23	Very Highly Fulfilled		
3. Collaboration	3.63	Very Strong		
Grand Mean	3.85	Very Satisfactory		
4. Strengths				
			<b>MEAN</b>	<b>DE</b>
a. Functional Performance	No strengths			
b. Fulfillment of Responsibilities	Close collaboration with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the PNP		4.46	VHF
	Coordination with the concerned LGUs and local civil society groups		4.43	VHF
c. Extent of Collaboration				
RLAs	Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team.		4.29	ES
	Provide policy guidelines and direction of poverty initiatives at the local levels.		4.27	ES
NGOs	Provide technical assistance and capability building to the provincial poverty reduction action team.		4.38	ES
	Formulate policy recommendations for poverty reduction.		4.38	ES
	Review, prioritize and endorse to the NAPC the poverty reduction investment programs/budgets of the region for funding & implementation.		4.31	ES
LGUs				
Province	Provide technical assistance in the implementation of poverty reduction projects.		4.24	ES
	Organize Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Team (PPRAT).		4.21	ES
Municipality	No strengths			
Barangay	No strengths			

**Table 18:** Status of the KALAHI Program (continuation)

MEASURES OF STATUS		MEAN	DE
5. Weaknesses			
a. Functional Performance	Endorse to the NAPC the annual budgets of NGAs, SUCs and special development authorities	3.45	VS
	Advocate the mobilization of funds to finance capability building for the NGOs	3.47	VS
b. Fulfillment of Responsibilities	Mobilization of Cabinet Officer for Regional Development (CORD) to facilitate resolution of RKCG matters that need cabinet action	4.05	HF
	Conduct periodic review and assessment of RCKG programs, projects and activities	4.08	HF
c. Collaboration RLAs	Augment local resources.	4.03	VS
	Monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Program.	4.15	VS
Private Sector	Augment local resources.	3.81	VS
	Integrate the Poverty reduction plans and programs of provincial governments, line agencies, SUCs, basic sectors in the regional poverty reduction plan.	4.00	VS
	Develop systems and strategies for the localization of poverty reduction programs.	4.00	VS
LGUs Province	Prepare Provincial Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program based on the municipality action plans.	3.33	MS
	Consolidate municipal data on poverty reduction.	3.57	VS
Municipality	Consolidation of Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plans.	3.23	MS
	Consolidate, process, and analyze the barangay monitoring reports.	3.24	MS
Barangay	Prepare Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Plan/Program.	3.18	MS
	Organize Barangay Poverty Reduction Action Team (BPRAT)	3.31	MS
	Track the extent of unmet minimum basis needs of families and communities	3.31	MS

This implies that the KALAHI program through the strong leadership of the RKCG converges the poverty reduction efforts of the government bureaucracy at all levels as well as those of the private sector, the civil society and most especially the basic sectors to address the economic, political, socio-cultural dimensions of poverty in the region.

Data shows that KALAHI programs and projects are being implemented in the different identified KALAHI barangays in Region 1. Accordingly, regional line agencies, local governments and the private sector have converged in KALAHI communities by providing available programs and financial resources to immediate poverty reduction needs such as: medical and dental missions, repair and provision of small equipment for barangay multi-purpose, day care and health centers and schools, livelihood and enterprise skills development, seeding and animal dispersals, and micro-financing for micro enterprise livelihood projects.

Private sector programs and resources have also been channeled to KALAHI Barangays primarily for human development services and livelihood and employment opportunities.

A further analysis of the results of this study across the three groups revealed that the LGUS have consistently given the lowest rating in the fulfillment of responsibilities and functional performance of the RKCG and in the collaboration of members in the implementation of the KALAHI program. This implies that the RKCG has not completely institutionalized and localized the convergence approach at the local levels. This requires the RKCG, therefore, to strengthen and intensify its operations.

Noticeably, most of the weaknesses of the KALAHI program were identified at the local levels particularly in the municipalities and barangays as the principal delivery and receiving mechanisms. This implies a weak program structure at the local levels which needs to be improved to come up with an efficient poverty diagnosis, planning, monitoring and evaluation, linkaging and coordinating with all stakeholders and resource mobilization. This shows that poverty reduction at the municipal and barangay levels has not yet been strongly internalized. Hence both program structure and processes are not well implanted within LGUs concerned.

The LGUs being the frontline institutions in responding to the increasing service delivery requirements of the people have to be assisted by the RKCG by providing support mechanisms for them to become active partners of the national government in poverty reduction efforts. In pursuing institutional reforms, the RKCG should provide technical assistance at the local levels along governance

structure and processes of the poverty reduction program and technical support for the institutionalization of a local monitoring system for poverty diagnosis and planning. Further, policies that will encourage participation of basic sectors and assistance of people's organizations in barangay-based activities should also be formulated.

The following are the problems in the implementation of the KALAHI program: (1) inadequate policy settings which account for weak KALAHI program structure at the local level. (2) highly-politicized environment; (3) change in leadership; (4) inadequate funding; (5) inadequate managerial and governance capability because of limited education; (6) bureaucratic culture of patronage system, and (7) attitude of beneficiaries towards government's programs and projects.

It can be said that these problems pose a threat to the implementation of the KALAHI program. The limitations/weaknesses cited also hinder the RKCG to achieve the desired level for it to become a model RKCG. Thus, appropriate program mechanisms should be developed by strengthening the identified limitations and taking advantage of the opportunities that abound. In so doing, The RKCG will ensure that maximization of all available resources in providing the right poverty reduction framework and the right environment for helping people gain access to the best quality of life possible.

#### **A COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK FOR SECTORAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OF THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Developed by the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan is the national strategy of the Arroyo administration in reducing poverty in the country. It is anchored on the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (2001-2004). KALAHI targets the poorest and most vulnerable barangays and sectors in communities. It converges the poverty reduction efforts of the government bureaucracy at all levels, as well as those of the private sector, the civil society, and most especially, the basic sectors to address the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions of poverty ([www.dswd.gov.ph](http://www.dswd.gov.ph)).

As the KALAHI forerunner in the region, the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group consolidates and coordinates flagship projects and programs of government agencies along the KALAHI's strategic thrusts. It takes charge of ensuring the fulfillment of commitments to KALAHI barangays and monitoring and evaluating KALAHI efforts in cooperation with the RLAs, PS, and LGUs. It also consolidates and reports on the regionwide status of KALAHI implementation.



Following the RKCG's footsteps and based on their respective mandates, different government agencies are also implementing their own programs as part of the multi-leveled and multi-stranded intervention to reduce poverty.

Under the KALAHÍ concept, each stakeholder has a definite role to play in the same manner that every Filipino has a social responsibility in reducing poverty in the country. It is within this purview that this collaboration framework was developed

The collaboration framework was evolved from the identified strengths and weaknesses of the RKCG. Findings of this study show that the RKCG is strong in fulfilling its responsibilities; however, weak points were seen in the performance of its functions and in the collaboration of its members.

It is the goal of this collaboration framework to bring line agencies, local government units, non-government organizations and members of communities together in an atmosphere of support to systematically solve existing and emerging problems in the RKCG that could not be solved by one group alone.

The collaboration framework is designed to help RLAs, PS and LGUs strengthen their existing collaboration. Specifically, the framework will assist these groups to achieve clearly defined outcomes. Drawing from a diversity of people and opinions, the framework is based on a core foundation of shared vision, mission, principles and values. It clarifies the factors, both process and contextual, which can either promote or inhibit the effectiveness of a collaboration which, in turn, affects its desired outcomes.

### **Grounding**

In this framework, elements are grounded in valuing and respecting diversity of the members of the Regional KALAHÍ Groups.

Valuing diversity honors the uniqueness, and talents each person, group, and organization brings to the collaboration. It opens the door to gaining an understanding of how all the elements fit together and how each is important to the whole. Diversity brings a critical balance to any level of collaboration. When a real diversity of people and opinion occurs in a group, a reverence for the shared vision often takes hold. It becomes easier to understand each member's perspective on current reality, and each other's ideas about courses of action. People whose lives are affected by decisions must be equally represented in the decision process (Hogue, 1993).

### **Core Foundation**

The core foundation in this collaboration framework represents the common ground of understanding. It

focuses on creating a sense of common purpose that binds RKCG members together and inspires them to fulfill their deepest aspirations. The discipline of building a Core is centered on a process, whereby members in the collaboration articulate their common interests - around vision, mission, values and principles. Together, the vision, mission, values, and principles describe why the collaboration matters and how it fits in the larger world. (a) Vision, an image of the desired future, (b) Mission, the purpose of the collaboration and (c) Values and Principles, the beliefs individuals and the group hold. These are the guides for creating working relationships and describe how the group intends to operate on a day-by-day basis.

### **VISION**

Transforming Region I into a dynamic and vibrant economy, effectively playing the role as catalytic agents of social change. Advocating sustainable development, people empowerment, good governance, and equitable distribution of the fruits of development in pursuit of the welfare and interests of the region's constituents.

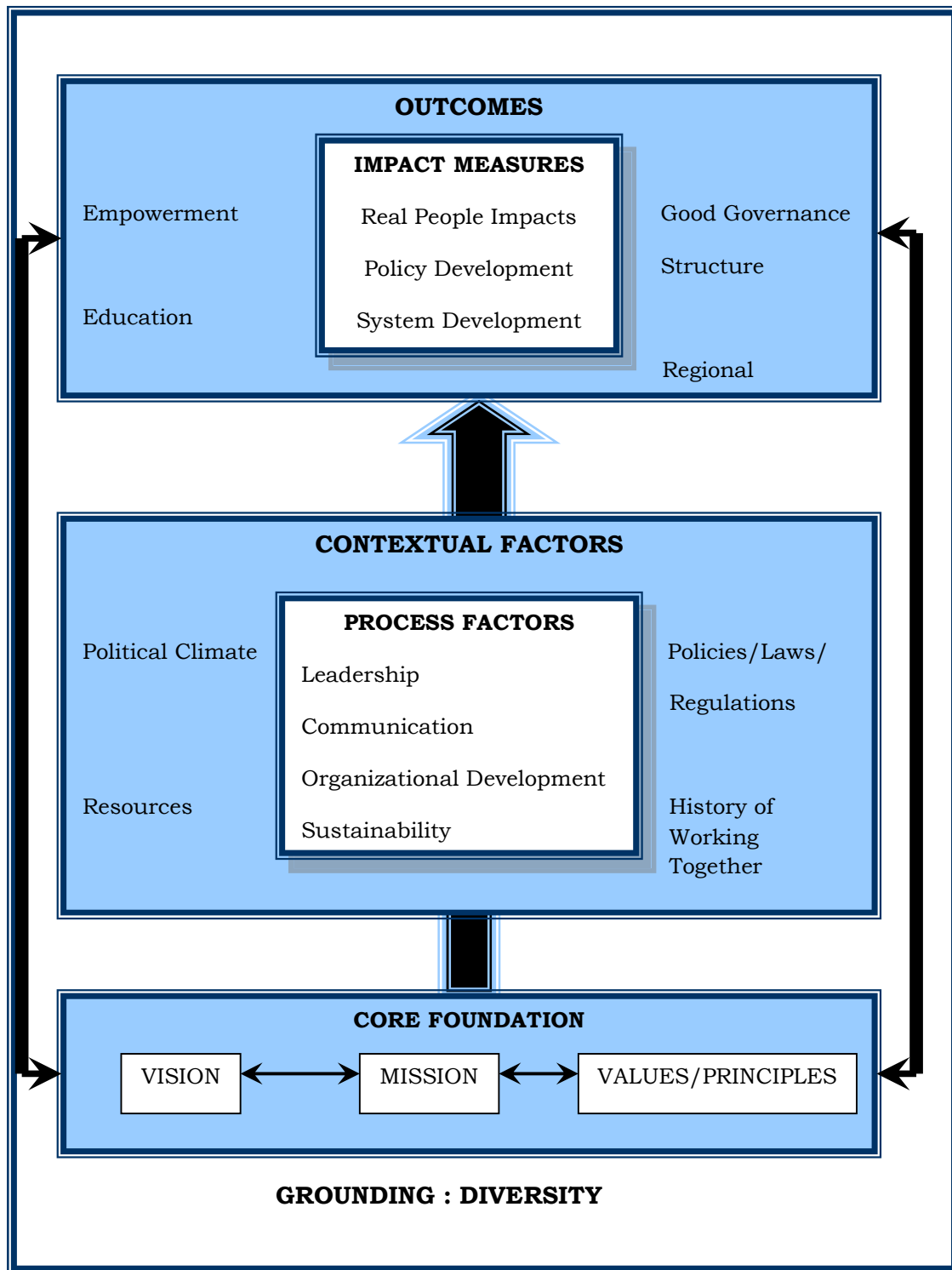
Adhering to competence and innovativeness in the areas of regional and physical planning, project development and monitoring and evaluation using state-of-the-art technologies; Resourceful and reliable in responding to the highest quality of service demanded by our clients; Outstanding in coordinating and linking with other government agencies, local government units and non-government organizations within and across the regions.

### **MISSION**

Serving as the overall strategy in the achievement of its vision is the mission, which aims to: provide the framework for synchronized regional development planning, policy formulation, investment programming, project development, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation; extend technical expertise/advice to the special bodies, agencies, LGUs, academe and NGOs/POs and civil societies; advocate the institutionalization of policies, appropriate practices and state-of-the-art technology along productivity, information and communication technology, sustainable development, and good governance; support research and development communication as means to facilitate global, regional, and local networking and lining; and

### **VALUES and PRINCIPLES**

In the pursuit of excellence in the discharge of the organizational mandates, the RKCG employees shall carry out their mission through consensus building, resource sharing, and full participation of all the stakeholders. They shall be guided by the core values



**Figure 2:** A Collaboration Framework for Sectoral Program Management of the Regional Development Council

of integrity and honesty, competence, innovativeness and creativity.

## **OUTCOMES**

As previously noted, a collaboration is a process of participation through which people, groups and organizations work together on the strengths of the community to achieve desired results.

Outcomes represent the desired "conditional" changes. While a vision articulates a picture of the future that the group seeks to create, the outcomes address specific "conditions to be achieved."

The following is a list of the specific outcomes as a result of this study. Indicators are also listed as short term measures of achievement which include data counts, change in beliefs or behaviors, or new policies.

**Empowerment:** Ensuring the inclusion of all members of the RKCG including the poor in the local communities in venue for participation in decision-making and management processes.

**Indicators:** Number of capacity-building, trainings, institutionalization of mechanisms conducted.

**Advocacy/Education:** Availability of accurate and up-to date information about the poverty in the community. Well-informed members about the structure and process of the KALAH Program.

**Indicators –** Number of trainings, regular meetings, capability building, and orientation conducted about the objectives and activities of the organization, number of publications about the program.

**Regional Partnership for development:** Presence of inter-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships in poverty reduction program. Involvement of RLAs, NGOs, and LGUs particularly the municipalities and barangays in poverty reduction program from situation analysis, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

**Indicators –** increased number of membership of NGOs, regular meetings, planning workshop of these multisectoral bodies, number of trainings conducted to target beneficiaries in various program operations, projects and activities.

**Good Governance Structure:** A dedicated program structure that will provide coordination, program focus, stakeholder participation and sustainability. **Indicators –** Number of functional Local Poverty Reduction Action Teams, presence of action plans/programs, audited reports, accomplishment reports, number of resolutions, policies and ordinances regarding activities, plans, programs and projects. Number of trainings conducted on the institutionalization of program

**Effective Service Delivery:** Responsible institutions in providing basic services for improvement of quality of life. Retaining and improving quality of life characterized by vital communities, accessible services, and responsive political and social institutions.

**Indicators –** Number of beneficiaries, number of projects and programs implemented, number of participating agencies.

**Impact Measures:** Impact measures are embedded within the context of outcomes. Impact measures are specific measures related to any outcome defined by a collaboration. Impact measures articulate the dramatically improved results which support sustainable change and eventually "conditional" change (Kretzman, J. P. and McKnight, J. L., 1993). These measures may be used as tools in monitoring and evaluating the direct effects of the KALAH Program to the targeted beneficiaries. Four categories of impact measures have been identified: real people impacts, policy development, systems development, and resources development. A definition for each impact measure follows: **Real People Impacts.** The behavior changes occurring among RLAs, NGOs, and LGUs, and within communities. These can include sharing of gifts and building on community capacity and strengths.

**Policy Development:** The evidence of policies and procedures that support and sustain ongoing poverty reduction efforts.

**Systems Development:** Organizations, agencies and groups of people who work together in a common cause.

**Resource Development:** A range of resources including skills, time, people and money realigned to focus on common issues of the KALAH.

## **Process Factors for Collaboration**

Process factors focus on the "how to" aspect of collaboration. They deal with the specific skills and/or components necessary to build effective working relationships and contribute to the capacity of the organization. Six major factors have been identified for this collaboration framework: understanding the organization, organization development, leadership, communication, research and evaluation, and sustainability. Each of these factors covers a broad range of skills or tasks which impact the collaboration process (Hogue, 1993).

## **Understanding the Organization**

Understanding the Regional KALAH Convergence Group, including its people, cultures, values and habits, provides the foundation for effective collaboration. It allows the members to gain a sense

of the vision the organization has for itself and the underlying values of the members. A close look at the organization helps identify members in the organization who have power and those who have. The members will recognize the diversity of strengths and weaknesses that influence the success of the collaboration. A clear view of the overall strengths can be made and not focus on the weaknesses.

### **Organization Development**

Organization development is the process of mobilizing members to address important issues and build upon the strengths of the organization. The natural communication systems and formal information channels enable one to begin the process of exploring issues, goals and objectives (Meszaros, 1993).

The collaboration in the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group begins in the process of defining its vision, mission, values, principles and outcomes within the context of the attitudes, norms, beliefs and values of the Regional Development Council. Efforts begin to build teamwork and mobilize resources (revenue, time, people) to build on the positive environment within the RKCG, overcome potential barriers and begin to mobilize the members to institute change.

In this context, the RKCG should maintain an open, flexible and dynamic structure to sustain its performance. Transparency and accountability should also be considered.

While mainstream collaborative efforts begin with the process outlined, a sense of trust is critical to successful organizational development strategies. People often see the language of collaboration in rhetoric, with actions not rooted in melding actual and long lived organizational development.

### **Leadership**

Organizational collaboration requires effective leadership. While leadership is often defined as to who is in power, the definition of leadership for successful collaborations is broadened to include those who impact change within their organization (De Bevoise, 1986). Thus, the roles and responsibilities of the RLAs, NGOs and LGUs in the KALAHI program as key stakeholders should be well-defined as this will spell out their efficiency in the performance of their functions.

One of the major responsibilities of leadership is to assure that appropriate members have been brought to the collaboration. A diverse membership should encompass potentially impacted groups and individuals (De Bevoise, 1986). In the RKCG, collaborative efforts should provide for NGOs and GOs partnerships. Norms of operation must be

potentials. Potential audiences are identified. Potential collaborators will be discovered and potential turf battle insights will be gained.

established which include protocol, conflict resolution, political and cultural sensitivity, structure, and roles and responsibilities. Leadership should facilitate and support team building and capitalize upon diversity and individual, group and organizational strengths.

### **Communication**

Collaborative efforts are dependent upon open and clear communication. Norms of communicating must be established which assure "language usage" which is acceptable to all members. Terminology must be clarified so that shared meaning can occur. A formal process for communication between meetings must be established (i.e., weekly phone calls, mailings, faxed updates). Communication from the collaboration to the NAPC and RDC must be established. This may involve the development of working relationships with the media and other formal information channels. Establishing and maintaining non-formal communication channels with local community leaders will also be essential. Marketing of the collaboration efforts must also be conducted in order to obtain community support and acquire needed resources.

### **Research and Evaluation**

Obtaining and utilizing information about the KALAHI program is essential for collaborative groups. The effect of meeting the desired outcomes is the primary objective of a collaboration evaluation. Data on poverty reduction must be collected which establish benchmarks for future impact and outcome analysis. Reviewing examples of other successful models of collaboration among LGUs, RLAs and NGOs will help in adopting or customizing a collaboration model. Evaluation efforts are essential to monitor progress related to the group's goals and objectives and to make modifications where necessary. Numerous methodologies may be employed in this process including quantitative, qualitative, and participatory strategies. Strategies for communicating program impacts must be established (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993).

### **Sustainability**

In order for collaborative efforts to be sustainable, it is essential that systems be instituted to provide sustained membership, resources, and strategic program planning. This will involve membership guidelines relating to terms of office and replacement of members. Formal operational agreements may be necessary. Resource development efforts must be ongoing to assure that the appropriate level of

revenue, time and people are available to conduct the group's programming efforts. Planning must be both short-term and long-term. The collaboration must be able to identify emerging trends and issues and develop strategies for needed expansion.

### **Contextual Factors**

As can be seen in the framework, the process factors are embedded within the context of the community. The relationship between contextual factors and process factors is reciprocal and mutually influential. Contextual factors are characteristics of the environment that are related to the effectiveness of collaboration. Environment here includes but is not limited to the physical and the structural settings of the community, (i.e., resources available in the community), and the social context (i.e., political atmosphere). The collaboration may be able to influence these characteristics, but the group does not have control over them.

Within the collaboration framework, six contextual factors have been identified as important to the success of a collaboration: connectedness, history of working together, political climate, policies/laws/regulations, resources, and catalysts.

In cases where minority/majority tension underlies the issues of concerns to the RKCG, respect for diversity is a key element. Has the leadership in the RKCG historically voiced the "rhetoric for change" with no real positive outcomes, or has the leadership demonstrated sincere commitment to valuing diversity -- a part of the community's fabric? The capacity of diverse voices to be heard and valued influences each contextual factor, beginning with the ability of diverse citizens to form strong bonds of connection within and outside their cultural society through seeing their concerns as equally important catalysts to initiate positive change (Meszaros, 1993)

**Connectedness:** Connectedness refers to the linkages between individuals, groups, and organizations. That is, how people know each other or how they are connected to one another. There are multiple types of connections that are not mutually exclusive. These types of connection include: individual, group, community, and networks. People are drawn together socially through organizations and groups, and by informal and/or formal rules, resources, and relationships (Hogue, 1993).

An example of individual connection would be two individuals who are drawn together because of a social history that is not related to their careers or employment. Thus, on an individual level, connectedness can be measured on whether an individual feels a linkage or bond with another individual. On a group level, people feel that they have associations or a sense of belonging to different groups and organizations. At the community level,

connectedness refers to universally understood principles and values of the community.

Finally, one can get a measure of communication by examining whether there are "natural" networks of information exchange at each level and across the three levels. These networks may be formal and/or informal, but they provide an established pattern of communication at each of the levels -- individuals, groups, communities -- and across them. Collaborations that employ both the formal and informal networks of communication to support them are more likely to succeed. In sum, collaborations that are effective involve well connected individuals, groups, organizations and communities and have established informal and formal communication networks at all levels of connectedness.

**History of Working Together/Customs:** History, has to do with an organization's past with regard to working cooperatively or competitively. Collaboration is more likely to succeed in communities that have a history of working together cooperatively. Usually, in organizations where there is a long history of cooperation, there exists a corresponding history of solving problems. These organizations work on difficult issues by employing the available resources and developing creative, organization-wide solutions based on the desired outcomes. Moreover, in organizations where a history of cooperation exists, the collaboration members trust each other and the collaboration process. A diversity of members is welcomed as a resource and this diversity enhances creative solutions (Mattessich and Monsey, 1992).

Finally, the power structure of the organization also demonstrates the history of working together for the shared values of the organization. In organizations where a competitive history exists, it might be useful to implement education programs for potential collaborators regarding the benefits, costs, and processes of collaboration. Collaborations succeed in an environment that is oriented toward cooperation and away from competition.

**Political Climate:** Political climate is the history and environment surrounding power and decision making (Ayson, 2000). Political climate may be within the RKCG as a whole, systems within the organization or networks of people. A healthy collaboration insures that the political climate affecting or potentially affecting the collaboration have been identified and utilized in the positive development of the collaboration.

Recognizing and welcoming the political climate as a resource sets the stage for engaging a diversity of support for the shared vision of the collaboration. A wide cross section of people, groups and

organizations within the identified political climate will better insure a mutually inclusive membership within the collaboration.

Widespread political support is important in developing and sustaining collaborations, particularly for policy making and implementation of policy. In collaborative political climates, there is a demonstrated willingness to dialog, accept and negotiate new ideas, to navigate through conflict, and to be open toward emerging trends. Moreover, it is important that a collaboration has members who know which decision makers need to be influenced and how to influence those decision makers.

Collaborations which have support and endorsement of key people, groups and organizations in power are more likely to be effective in reaching the agreed upon outcomes. Effective collaborations have the potential of fostering new and emerging leaders. Together with existing people in power, new and emerging leaders find an opportunity to align themselves with an agreed-upon shared focus and a wide range of people within the community who are committed to reaching positive outcomes (Plumptre 2000).

**Policies/Laws/Regulations:** Solving problems collaboratively means transforming and changing policies, laws and regulations. Indeed, policies, laws and regulations represent all the concepts and activities that are used to resolve problems. Collaborations in the RKCG are more likely to succeed when supportive policies, laws and regulations are in place. This is especially true with regard to the policies and regulations within the collaborating members' groups and/or organizations, contributors, and the people using the service.

Policies, laws and regulations contribute to the political climate, but also directly affect the environment. Thus, whether systems and their structures, norms, and decision-making processes are open and supportive of collaboration depends in part on existing policies, laws and regulations. Sustainability of collaborations is often dependent on policies and practices in place (Leveriza, 2000).

**Resources:** Within a collaboration, resources refer to four types of capital: environmental, in-kind, financial, and human. Much of what has already been presented has to do with environmental capital. The environment can promote collaborations or it can discourage them. An environment where there is connectedness at all levels, a history of working together, a supportive political climate, and policies, laws and regulations that encourage cooperativeness, increases the probability of a successful collaboration.

In-kind capital has to do with what each of the collaboration members and their organizations contribute to the collaboration, such as meeting rooms, supplies, and computers. Financial capital involves monetary resources, which are often assumed to be most important. Note, however, that collaborations that cooperate only to seek funding are more likely to fail than collaborations that form as comprehensive organization-wide responses to a problem. That emphasis shifts into a vision.

Human capital is the most important asset in collaboration. The investment of people's time, expertise and energy into a collaboration is an essential contribution to achieving the collaboration's shared vision. Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has." Each collaboration member and organization demonstrates commitment to the collaboration by contributing and/or realigning resources to the collaboration. The contribution can be in one or all four of the types of capital mentioned previously. However, the contribution of human capital to a collaboration is a crucial investment for sustainability.

**Catalysts:** Catalysts get the collaboration started. The existing problem(s) or the reason(s) for the collaboration to exist must be viewed by the RKCG and potential collaboration members as a situation that requires a comprehensive response. In this way, the problem(s) or reason(s) are the catalysts. For example, before the prevention of poverty can be an issue to collaborate around, the organization must view the poor as having skills and gifts that can enhance the quality of life in the community.

In addition to an organization-wide issue, the second type of catalyst needed is a convenor. This is the person who calls the initial meeting of a collaboration and draws everyone into a dialog about possible solutions to the situation. If the collaboration is going to move forward and establish a shared vision, the person who convenes the collaborative group must be respected and viewed as a "legitimate" player. Convenors must have organizational and interpersonal skills, and must carry out the role with passion and fairness (Hogue, 1993).

Using the framework, the RKCG can experiment with redesigning or changing the direction of an existing collaboration. In the process, the RKCG members will recognize increased skills in communication, decision making, and applying research. The framework will guide collaboration members in dealing with daily problems and opportunities. It will help member-agencies focus on investing in their capacity to develop new solutions while maximizing a range of resources to their fullest potential.

Respect for diversity lays the groundwork for a dynamic collaboration. The framework foundation provides a purpose for collaborators to gather around. In sum, the contextual factors influence and are influenced by the process factors. The dynamic interaction among these factors determines the possibility of having a successful collaboration. In order to prepare for possible obstacles and pitfalls, the contextual factors (connectedness, history of working together, political climate, policies/laws/regulations, resources, and catalysts) can be evaluated before forming/developing a collaboration. Additionally, these factors can be used in ongoing evaluation of a collaboration.

The framework itself can be used as a tool for communication, setting direction and focus, defining results, leveraging new resources or diagnosing problems.

**Setting Direction and Focus:** Having a clear direction and focus for a collaboration defines the purpose of the collaboration as what its members seek to create. Setting the direction and focus begins with establishing the vision, mission, values, and principles. Defining the outcome(s) further establishes identity and fundamental purpose.

Applying the range of factors to the processes and contexts of the collaboration results in a greater shared understanding of what the collaboration stands for, where it's going, the community environment, and how it intends to make its outcomes a reality.

**Opening Dialog:** Whether one is working with an existing collaboration or developing a new one, communication within the collaboration and with those affected by the collaboration is critical. Using the factors as a focus of discussion may reduce fragmentation and move group conversation from polite discussion to skillful dialog, sound decision making, and action. Open and honest dialog contributes to the distribution of power within the group while increasing self-discipline and commitment. It also assists with viewing issues and problems in a holistic approach.

**Leveraging New Resources:** The framework may be used to explore new resources and enhance existing resources. Many collaborations look for "new money" to support the actions of the collaborations, when in fact the most valuable resources available exist within the RKCG.

The framework may be used to examine the membership of the collaboration. By reviewing the process factors a group may decide to add a member who agrees to facilitate the meetings or provide evaluation expertise. Key people in the community may be added who are viewed as "catalysts" in making something happen. The framework has the

capacity to redeploy people more effectively. The framework assists collaborations in designing fundamental mechanisms that may increase the stability and value of the membership. For example, using existing communication systems such as newsletters, telephones, and electronic mail is far more effective than creating new systems.

### **Level of Functionality of the Collaboration Framework**

Table 19 shows the result of the validation on the functionality of the collaboration framework by the expert evaluators. As can be gleaned from the table, the collaboration framework was rated 4.18 interpreted as highly functional. This means that the framework is very appropriate for sectoral program management of the Regional Development Council.

A perusal of the measures of validation reveals that the framework includes process and objectives that are realistic and easy to implement. Moreover, it is a very appropriate guide for an effective Regional Development Council in policy-making and development planning.

The following are the comments and suggestions of the expert evaluators which were considered to enrich and strengthen the framework: inclusion of leadership structuring, the consideration of deep-seated biases of various groups (NGOs, NGAs, and LGUs), and resource mobilization and development.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

From the above findings, the following conclusions were drawn: (a) The very satisfactory performance of the Regional KALAHI Convergence Group connotes its strong leadership and commitment in the implementation of their various program. (b) The very high fulfillment of responsibilities of the RKCG reflects strong coordination and link aging with all its members and partners in development. (c) The very strong collaboration among LGUs, RLAs and PS connotes an effective service delivery and priority interventions to targeted beneficiaries. (d) The strength lies on the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the RKCG, this highlighted the significance of the organization as the KALAHI forerunner in the region. On the other hand the weak points were seen on the performance of the RKCG and the collaboration of its members. (e) The very satisfactory status of the KALAHI program ascertains the effectiveness of the convergence of resources, programs/projects and stakeholders and sectors in reducing poverty in the region (f) A proposed functional collaboration framework may be adopted to come up with a more effective and responsive RKCG.

**Table 19:** Level of Functionality of the Collaboration Framework  
For a Sectoral Program Management of the RDC

MEASURES OF FUNCTIONALITY	MEAN	DE
1. The framework addresses the identified strengths of the Regional Development Council.	4.20	VH
2. The Framework addresses the identified weaknesses of the Regional Development Council.	4.00	H
3. The Framework addresses the identified opportunities of the Regional Development Council.	4.20	VH
4. The Framework addresses the identified threats of the Regional Development Council.	4.00	H
5. The framework is comprehensive enough for an effective Regional development council in policymaking and development planning.	4.00	H
6. The framework is a very appropriate guide for an effective Regional development council in policymaking and development planning.	4.40	VH
7. The framework includes process and objectives that are realistic and easy to implement.	4.40	VH
8. The framework can facilitate the achievement of collaboration goals and objectives	4.20	VH
9. The framework provides for a strong policymaking and development planning scheme	4.00	H
10 The framework provides for a strong monitoring and evaluation scheme.	4.20	H
11.The framework is totally appropriate for what it is intended.	4.40	VH
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>4.18</b>	<b>H</b>

Legend: WM : Weighted Mean  
DE : Descriptive Equivalent  
VH : Very High

**Recommendations:** In consideration of the above conclusions, the following recommendations were formulated: (a) To improve the performance of the RKCG: On Planning: Capacity building on planning techniques should be approached in a holistic manner where the training program not only stops at preparing a plan, but continues with helping RLAs, PS and communities/local officials with the identification of projects and funding sources, financial support and monitoring and evaluation techniques. Planning documents should also be simplified taking into account the capabilities and needs of lower level government tiers.

**On budgeting:** The disconnect between planning and budgeting which is due to institutional factors can be addressed by better coordination. The RKCG can be invited to sit in the budget committee and/or participate in budget hearings. Moreover, mechanisms for greater coordination with the local legislature are needed to solicit support for the projects that are consistent with the development plan. (b) There should be synchronization in the planning and budgeting schedules at all levels so that projects which cannot be funded at the lower level can be raised to upper level tiers for possible inclusion in the budget.

**On monitoring and evaluation:** Monitoring responsibilities, similar to planning should be

delineated; this must be coupled with the institution of incentive systems to ensure compliance and sanctions. At the local level, since budgeting is more appreciated than monitoring, the RKCG should pursue performance monitoring with extensive participation from the private sector. Policies should be implemented requiring minimum number of civil society representatives in local committees. Further, the RKCG should conduct continuing organizational development along leadership training, planning, investment programming, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation to improve its performance. Moreover, training on leadership development should be conducted at the municipality and barangay levels to ensure sustained performance.

1. To further improve the fulfillment of responsibilities of the RKCG the following recommendations are given: (a) organizational mechanisms for program coordination and management should be adopted; (b) conduct of additional training and capability building for members, officers and secretariat; (c) Ensure the availability of funds for operational purposes; and (d) Conduct periodic review of organizational performance.

Provide incentives to encourage public-private-civil society collaboration/partnerships in poverty reduction program. Additionally, the RKCG should



intensify its advocacy and social marketing for members, stakeholders and partners.

2. Continuous policy advocacy activities, trainings and seminars and conduct of program evaluation research or studies may be adopted to strengthen the limitations of the program.

3. For a more effective poverty reduction, the following should be adopted: (a) adequate diagnostics, (b) sustainable and replicable forms of decentralized participatory planning, financing and capacity-building; (c) definition of a set of appropriate indicators to monitor and track the progress of governance and the reduction of poverty particularly at the local levels and (d) set up policies to improve procedures and practices for local level resource mobilization and management to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of local bodies in poverty reduction related activities.

4. Moreover, to help maintain its efficient implementation, the academe should also help strengthen the strengths and overcome the weaknesses of the program by engaging in research and extension programs and by disseminating practice-based lessons in local development.

5. The proposed collaboration framework should be adopted and implemented by the Regional KALAH I Convergence Group.

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