

# QUALITY GOVERNANCE EVALUATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

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## **Abstract**

*The Quality Governance Program (Q-Gov) is the Tarlac State University Center for Local Governance response to a progressive resource management system or tool that a Local Government Unit (LGU) can adopt to reduce if not totally eradicate red tape in the bureaucracy. Through the quality governance program the LGU enables the villages to improve local government administration, professionalize the village staff, overhaul the management of public enterprises, improve the delivery of public services and ultimately, become transparent and accountable. With this program, an LGU is expected to attain good governance by having sustainable and improved delivery of services. Evaluation of the villages was based on perceptible evidences gathered from various sources such as available materials and equipment, documents, photos, actual observations and interviews with village residents and other stakeholders. Every village was evaluated in terms of the availability, appropriateness, and completeness of the research indicators in all areas. Overall, Q-Gov is more than just having a checklist on how the resources are efficiently and effectively managed by the people in authority. It is a trust and a relationship building scheme between people and government.*

**Keywords:** Public Administration, Local Governance, Quality Governance Evaluation, Central Luzon, Philippines

## **Introduction**

Citizens in all nations always expect creation and delivery of high quality services from their respective governments. This expectation creates pressure to government to perform (Agrawal, Shah, and Wadhwa 2008).

Policy makers and academics agree that good governance matters for economic development. Scholars discovered that high-quality institutions have power, over the long run, to raise per capita income and promote growth in all parts of the world. The “development dividend” paid by good governance is large. Researchers estimate that when governance is improved by one standard deviation, incomes rise about three-fold in the long run, and infant mortality declines by two-thirds. Because such one standard deviation improvement constitutes just a fraction of the difference between the worst and best performers, it is within reach (The World Bank 2006).

According to Rothstein and Teorell (2008) the rapid growth in research on “good governance” in recent years has not only been concerned with growth and economic development. The “quality of government” factor has also been argued to have substantial effects on a number of important noneconomic phenomena, both at the individual level—such as subjective happiness and citizen support for government and at the societal level—such as the incidence of civil war and democratic stability . This perspective has shifted the focus away from variables such as physical capital, natural resources, and human capital to matters directly related to the sphere of government and politics. The emphasis is also different from some previous studies that point to long-term cultural traits as being related to the importance of social capital. Social capital, defined as access to social networks and generalized trust in other people, seems to be determined by the quality of government institutions rather than the other way around.

Quality of government has a substantial impact on economic development and well-being. Low quality reduces the trust people have in public authorities, misdirects public services and investments, increases the costs of public projects and private enterprise and reduces the willingness of entrepreneurs and foreign direct investors to set up a new firm. Low quality disproportionately affects the poor, who depend more on public services and support. Corruption can lead to higher levels of environmental pollution, by allowing illegal dumping of toxic waste. Low quality also reduces the impact of Cohesion Policy (Dijkstra 2011).

Good governance requires all concerned to be clear about the functions of governance and their own roles and responsibilities and those of others, and to behave in ways that are consistent with those roles. Being clear about one's own role, and how it relates to that of others, increases the chance of performing the role well. Clarity about roles also helps all stakeholders to understand how the governance system works and who is accountable for what (Langlands 2004).

Participation is a cross-cutting theme throughout good governance. Accountability, transparency and information focus on the participation of the population. Accountability stresses the importance of parliament or legislature in the participatory process. This reference to democratic form of government has been repeated by the Bank, without, however, directly linking its perception of participation to a specific form of government. For the Bank, participation is an overall principle, and democratic form of government is one possible way to get to more participation. Though the Bank's participatory approach does not directly call for a democratic form of government, it is hard to imagine which form of government could meet the requirements of the governance agenda, but a democratic one (Maldonado 2010).

The Quality Governance Program (Q-Gov) is the Tarlac State University Center for Local Governance response to a progressive resource management system or tool that a Local Government Unit (LGU) can adopt to reduce if not totally eradicate red tape in the bureaucracy. Red tape, according to the Merriam-Webster English dictionary, is a series of actions or complicated tasks that seem unnecessary but that a government or organization requires you to do in order to get or do something. Red tape generally includes filling out of seemingly unnecessary paperwork, obtaining of unnecessary licenses, having multiple people or committees approve a decision and having various low-level rules that make conducting one's affairs slower, more difficult, or both.

Through the quality governance program the LGU enables the villages to improve local government administration, professionalize the village staff, overhaul the management of public enterprises, improve the delivery of public services and ultimately, become transparent and accountable. With this program, an LGU is expected to attain good governance by having sustainable and improved delivery of services.

Overall, Q-Gov is more than just having a checklist on how the resources are efficiently and effectively managed by the people in authority. It is a trust and a relationship building scheme between people and government. Learning more about Q-Gov and its assessment areas mean embracing change. Quality governance embrace should be thought of as welcoming change and it is a convenient complement to learning how we run things in the villages. In time, Q-Gov can become a system or a tool that progressively weaves into the well-oiled machinery of governance and become a propeller of economic sustainability.

## **Statement of the Problem**

This study evaluated the villages in the Municipality of Anao in relation to the quality governance program of the Tarlac State University. Specifically, the study answered the following questions.

1. What are the profiles of the villages in terms of the following:
  - 1.1 land area?
  - 1.2 population?
  - 1.3 village income?
  - 1.4 number of staff in the village?
2. What are the evaluations of the villages in terms of the following:
  - 2.1 basic services?
  - 2.2 local governance and autonomy?
  - 2.3 health and sanitation?
  - 2.4 livelihood development?
3. Which village can be considered best in terms of:
  - 3.1 basic services?
  - 3.2 local governance and autonomy?
  - 3.3 health and sanitation?
  - 3.4 livelihood development?
  - 3.5 all these four criteria?

## **Conceptual Framework**

The study aimed to evaluate the 18 villages of Anao, Tarlac in terms of basic services, local governance and autonomy, health and sanitation, and livelihood development.

In principle the function of governance is to ensure that an organization or partnership fulfills its overall purpose, achieves its intended outcomes for citizens and service users, and operates in an effective, efficient and ethical manner. This principle should guide all governance activities.

Each organization has its own purpose. There are some general purposes that are fundamental to all public governance, including providing good quality services and achieving value for money (Langlands 2004).

Good governance sets the normative standards of development. It fosters participation, ensures transparency, demands accountability, promotes efficiency, and upholds the rule of law. It is a requisite for growth and poverty reduction. There are irreducible minimum levels of governance needed for large-scale investment to occur and for social programs to be supported (NEDA 2011).

Public services such as education, health, water and sanitation are essential for people centered development. Good public services and welfare are essential for a dignified life. Without them people are marginalized and excluded, have limited opportunities and are exploited so that their health, dignity and self-respect are eroded. Basic public services play an important part in the realization of poor people's human rights, especially women's rights. Women are the primary users of services and poor services contribute to maintaining unequal and unjust relations between men and women.

When citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) decide to focus on accountability work, the very first thing to do is to get organized. They need to be part of a movement, a CSO or a non-government organization (NGO). They need to decide what service to focus on. It is very important that gender outcomes are considered when deciding which service to focus on. They need to make sure that what they choose will strengthen gender equity and women's rights. They make sure that what is chosen has broad backing in the community and it includes the most marginalized.

To be successful, people must mobilize and be ready to participate. This is easier when working on something that

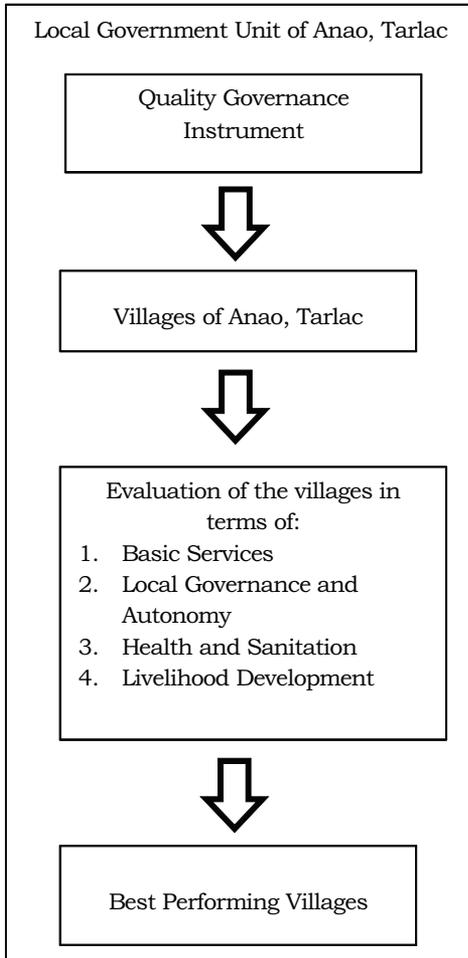


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

most people are concerned about. Broad participation is a crucial element in civil society accountability work. There is power in numbers and numbers show the extent of people's concern. Getting people to participate is closely linked to people's awareness and empowerment – an understanding within the community about why they are poor and marginalized. People's empowerment is necessary before the start of accountability work (ActionAid 2011).

Governance includes the state but transcends it by taking in the private sector and civil society. All of which are critical in sustaining human development. The institutions of

governance in the state, civil society and private sector must be designed to contribute to sustainable human development. This is done by establishing political, legal, economic and social circumstances for poverty reduction, job creation, environmental protection and the advancement of women (International Fund for Agricultural Development 1999).

## Methods and Materials

All the 18 villages in the Municipality of Anao were covered by this quality governance evaluation.

The instrument used in evaluating the villages was developed collaboratively by the officials of the different offices and a college of the Tarlac State University. Each component of the survey instrument had a subcomponent where the indicators to measure performance and provisions were identified. The indicators were measured in terms of the availability, adequacy as well as the type of the services and facilities necessary to conduct the affairs and functions of the village. Those involved in the instrument development were the Research and Extension Offices and the College of Public Administration. The villages were evaluated in term of the areas: Basic Services, Local Governance and Autonomy, Health and Sanitation Programs and Livelihood Development. These four areas were apportioned percentage weights and assigned descriptive ratings as can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Scores and Percentage Weights

Area	Maximum Score	Percentage Weight	Weighted Rating
Basic Services	150	35	52.5
Local Governance and Autonomy	150	30	45.0
Health and Sanitation	150	20	30.0
Livelihood Development	150	15	22.5
TOTAL		100%	150

Table 2. Range and Verbal Descriptions

Percentage Range per component and subcomponent	Verbal Description
0 – 20	Very much lacking
21 – 40	Lacking
41 – 60	Enough
61 – 80	More than enough
81 – 100	Much more than enough

Evaluation of the villages was based on perceptible evidences gathered from various sources such as available materials and equipment, documents, photos, actual observations as well as interviews with village residents and other stakeholders. All villages were evaluated in terms of the availability, appropriateness, and completeness of the research indicators.

## **Results**

### **1. Profiles of the Villages**

In Table 3, the profiles of the villages in the Municipality of Anao, Tarlac are presented. The total land area of the Municipality of Anao is 2,387 hectares. The village Sinense has the largest area with 333 hectares which is equivalent to 9.64 percent of the total land area. On the other hand, the village Poblacion has the smallest area of only 7 hectares which is equivalent to 0.29 percent of the total land area of the municipality.

The current population of the Municipality of Anao is 12,117 wherein the villages San Francisco West, Sto. Domingo, and Casili were found to have the biggest population. Sources of income of the evaluated villages were mainly from the internal revenue allotment, real property tax as well as imposed fees and charges. San Francisco West, Sto. Domingo, and Casili, had the biggest population, and the highest income among the villages.

Most of the evaluated villages had police, health worker, nutrition scholar, zone leader, day care worker, utility worker, and adjudication officer. Rizal had the least number of personnel among the evaluated villages.

Table 3. Profile of the Villages

Village	Land Area (Hectares)	Population	Income	Number of Staff
Baguindoc	210	355	669,139.00	19
Bantog	151	627	759,862.25	22
Campos	68	389	680,271.00	22
Carmen	135	751	768,458.00	26
Casili	230	1,005	897,865.50	35
Don Ramon	71	437	688,854.00	14
Hernando	41	554	719,966.00	18
Poblacion	7	392	690,831.71	27
Rizal	138	853	828,209.00	9
San Francisco East	89	518	752,190.00	30
San Francisco West	170	1,158	956,982.00	31
San Jose North	120	523	733,235.00	19
San Jose South	153	466	723,225.00	24
San Juan	106	500	751,580.00	27
San Roque	68	945	878,664.00	31
Sto. Domingo	137	1,248	1,200,561.96	33
Sinense	333	410	675,328.00	33
Suaverdez	160	986	892,042.00	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>12,117</b>		

## 2. Evaluation of the Villages

The villages in the Municipality of Anao, Tarlac were evaluated in terms of the following categories: basic services, local governance and autonomy, health and sanitation, and livelihood development.

### 2.1 Basic Services

The evaluation of the basic services of the villages in the Municipality of Anao, Tarlac is presented in Table 4. Those evaluated under basic services were physical working environment, service provider, and service enhancement program. Concerning the physical working environment, the villages were evaluated in terms of the following categories: waiting area, information materials, information area/desk, bulletin boards, cleanliness and orderliness, as well as office materials and equipment. Overall, the villages received a rating of 49.09 percent which is equivalent to enough in verbal description.

Table 4. Basic Services Evaluation

<b>Basic Services</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1. Physical Working Environment	49.09	Enough
2. Service Provider	47.39	Enough
3. Service Enhancement Program	35.77	Lacking
<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>44.08</b>	<b>Enough</b>

The category service provider has the following sub-components namely assigned officer of the day, actual number of personnel that come to office everyday for the whole year, actual time the personnel come into office, identification card or nametag, decorum, and service with a smile. In the service provider category, the villages of Anao received an average rating of 47.39 percent which is equivalent to enough in verbal description.

Regarding the service enhancement programs, the villages in Anao were generally rated as lacking. This can be attributed to their non-conduct of benchmarking activities, lack of evidence in the conduct of monitoring personnel attendance and discipline, and having no feedback mechanism to check the satisfaction of the clients of the villages.

Overall, based on the gathered data, the villages were evaluated as enough in terms of delivery of basic services.

## **2.2 Local Governance and Autonomy**

The categories under local governance and autonomy were village general governance, village profile, village development plan, village legislation, village budget, village assembly and record management. As presented in Table 5, the evaluated villages were found to be enough in terms of village general governance, village development plan, village assembly and record management.

Table 5. Local Governance and Autonomy Evaluation

<b>Local Governance and Autonomy</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1. Village General Governance	43.36	Enough
2. Village Profile	36.40	Lacking
3. Village Development Plan	43.32	Enough
4. Village Legislation	38.95	Lacking
5. Village Budget	39.50	Lacking
6. Village Assembly	46.00	Enough
7. Village Management	46.40	Enough
<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>41.99</b>	<b>Enough</b>

The evaluation regarding village profile, village legislation, and village budget had a verbal description of lacking. The lack of up-to-date village profile; evidence of dissemination and/or publication of the village profile; resolution and ordinance passed and approved by the council regarding revenue generation, education, health and safety; and budget documents regarding financial statements, revenue generation, and system for budgetary allocation and control were the factors which contributed to their low rating.

The overall evaluation of the villages in terms of local governance and autonomy was described as enough.

## **2.3 Health and Sanitation Evaluation**

In Table 6, the health and sanitation evaluation of the villages in the Municipality of Anao is presented. The villages were evaluated in terms of the categories: sanitation program, environmental protection, disease prevention, and advocacies.

The evaluated villages were found to have more than enough and enough categories in terms of their disease prevention and environmental protection program respectively. These situations were due to the fact that most villages had clean and green program, dengue and rabies prevention, maintenance of vacant lots, as well as food and sanitation.

Table 6. Health and Sanitation Evaluation

	<b>Health and Sanitation</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1.	Sanitation Program	20.38	Very much lacking
2.	Environmental Protection	60.55	Enough
3.	Disease Prevention	76.17	More than enough
4.	Advocacies	34.00	Lacking
	<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>47.77</b>	<b>Enough</b>

In terms of sanitation program and advocacies, the villages were rated as very much lacking and lacking respectively. Regarding sanitation, the evaluated villages had no: material recovery facility, segregation process, proper solid waste collection, and composting area.

The villages were rated as lacking regarding advocacies. This could be attributed to their minimal level of dissemination regarding the programs they implemented.

Overall, the health and sanitation programs of the villages were evaluated as enough.

## 2.4 Livelihood Development

In terms of livelihood development, the villages were evaluated using the following categories: village livelihood development plan; livelihood development plan implementation; support to cooperatives; support to small, medium and large scale enterprises; other livelihood initiatives.

Table 7. Livelihood Development Evaluation

<b>Livelihood Development</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
VillageLivelihood Development Plan	44.64	Enough
Livelihood Development Plan Implementation	19.25	Very much lacking
Support to Cooperatives	2.35	Very much lacking
Support to Small, Medium and Large Scale Enterprises	22.80	Lacking
Other Livelihood Initiatives	21.33	Lacking
<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>22.07</b>	<b>Lacking</b>

As presented in Table 7, the villages were evaluated with a verbal description equivalent to enough in terms of having livelihood development plan. The villages got an evaluation of lacking regarding support to small, medium, and large scale enterprises and other livelihood initiatives. The villages received a very much lacking rating regarding the implementation of their livelihood development plan and support to cooperatives.

Overall, the livelihood development programs of the villages were evaluated as lacking.

### 3. Best Performing Villages

In Table 8, the rating of each village in terms of basic services, local governance and autonomy, health and sanitation, as well as livelihood development is presented.

Evaluation of the villages was based on the perceptible evidences gathered from various sources such as available materials and equipment, documents, photos, actual observations together with interviews with the residents of the villages and other stakeholders. Every village was evaluated in terms of the availability, appropriateness, and completeness of the research indicators in all areas.

Table 8. Rating of Each Village

Village	Basic Services	Local Governance and Autonomy	Health & Sanitation	Livelihood Development	Total	Overall Ranking
Baguindoc	15.75	25.05	15.60	2.25	58.65	16
Bantog	20.30	25.80	21.20	8.85	76.15	5
Campos	20.30	28.50	12.40	4.73	65.93	11
Carmen	24.85	40.20	16.40	11.25	92.70	1
Casili	31.85	35.70	17.00	2.25	86.80	3
Don Ramon	17.85	28.50	16.40	10.50	73.25	8
Hernando	19.60	27.00	14.20	1.95	62.75	15
Poblacion	8.75	15.90	16.20	-	40.85	18
Rizal	27.65	27.30	15.20	4.50	74.65	6
San Francisco East	23.10	24.60	12.40	4.50	64.60	14
San Francisco West	30.80	34.20	16.80	10.43	92.23	2
San Jose North	24.50	28.80	15.60	4.20	73.10	9
San Jose South	20.30	26.10	17.20	1.50	65.10	13
San Juan	22.75	32.40	17.00	7.20	79.35	4
San Roque	23.10	32.10	11.20	3.00	69.40	10
Sto. Domingo	28.88	22.20	14.40	9.00	74.48	7
Sinense	22.40	27.30	15.20	0.75	65.65	12
Suaverdez	20.30	16.50	17.40	2.55	56.75	17

Casili, San Francisco West, and Sto. Domingo were the top performing villages in terms of the ratings given regarding basic services. Their high ratings can be attributed to the eagerness of the village officials to serve their constituents better. The three cited villages had the biggest population among the evaluated villages.

Carmen, Casili, and San Francisco West topped the local governance and autonomy evaluation. These villages were found to have well organized documents compared with the other villages included in this study.

Bantog, Suaverdez, and San Jose South received the highest ratings in terms of health and sanitation. These villages were found to have material recovery facilities. They implemented segregation and they had proper solid waste collection process.

Carmen, Don Ramon and San Francisco West got the best evaluation in terms of livelihood development programs. These villages implemented their livelihood development plans, and they supported cooperatives in terms of financial assistance and capacity building.

Carmen, San Francisco West and Casili ranked 1st, 2nd, and 3rd respectively in terms of the overall evaluation of the villages.

### **Implication of the Study**

A cornerstone of good governance is adherence to the rule of law, that is, the impersonal and impartial application of stable and predictable laws, statutes, rules, and regulations, without regard for social status or political considerations (NEDA 2011).

Good governance flows from a shared ethos or culture, as well as from systems and structures. It cannot be reduced to a set of rules, or achieved fully by compliance with a set of requirements. This spirit or ethos of good governance can be expressed as values and demonstrated in behavior.

Different types of organizations have different statutory requirements for the publication of their decisions. Over and above these requirements, transparent decisions that are clearly explained are more likely to be understood by staff, the public and other stakeholders and to be implemented effectively. It is easier to evaluate the impact of decisions that are transparent, and therefore have evidence on which to draw in making future decisions.

A hallmark of good governance is a clearly defined level of delegation by the governing body to the executive for decision making. The governing body sets policies as parameters within which the executive works in behalf of the governing body. For this to work well, it is important that governors do not concern themselves with levels of details that are inappropriate for their role, while ensuring that they are not too far removed to provide effective oversight and scrutiny.

Real accountability requires a relationship and a dialogue. Accountability involves an agreed process for both giving an account of your actions and being held to account; a systematic approach to put that process into operation; and a focus on explicit results or outcomes. Real accountability is concerned not only with reporting on or discussing actions already completed, but also with engaging with stakeholders to understand and respond to their views as the organization plans and carries out its activities (Langlands 2004).

The allocation of public budgets and the mobilization of resources for service provision are not simple, mechanical processes. Conditions have to be assessed and priorities set; policies and programs have to be approved and plans have to be prepared and implemented. This long and complex process is influenced by numerous stakeholders who take account of a wide range of issues that include power and profit as well as the problems of the poor. Governments are responsible in

principle for ensuring access for all to basic services. In practice, the competition for scarce resources makes allocation of funding for the provision of services a political process in which those with power influence the decisions and those without power remain sidelined in terms of both the process and the outcomes (Ratnayake 2007).

Safety and quality systems require constant development to meet changing internal and external expectations and stakeholder needs. Governance for safety and quality is thus not only about meeting or exceeding minimum standards, but also includes a trajectory of continual improvement (Queensland Government 2012).

Sustainable poverty reduction depends on sound policies, effective partnerships and systematic inclusion of the poor, affected groups and women in the development process. Good governance was seen as being critical to the development process and to the effectiveness of development assistance, and thus merited a specific inclusion in the institutions performance assessment methodology. The assessment process sets out the key factors affecting effective resource use in the pursuit of the ultimate goal of poverty reduction. There are four key factors within a beneficiary state: (a) macroeconomic policies; (b) structural policies; (c) policies for reducing inequalities; (d) governance and public-sector performance (International Fund for Agricultural Development 1999).

The result of the Q-Gov program of the Tarlac State University can be made as basis of the LGUs to strengthen their governance. This will not only translate to better service delivery, it will also serve as a learning venue for both the LGU officials and academicians on how to fortify their collaboration towards attaining the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016.

An educational institution serves as the molding ground for the future leaders of a country; therefore, every effort made by an educational institution towards attaining the LGUs vision of good governance will translate to the appreciation of the students on what good governance really is. Advocating good governance should not just be lip service among educators, rather, educators should be personally engaged in the advocacy.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the gathered data and findings of this study the following conclusions are made.

The villages were evaluated as satisfactory on the delivery of basic services, on local governance and autonomy, as well as on health and sanitation programs. The livelihood development programs of the villages were evaluated as poor.

The quality governance evaluation revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluated villages in the Municipality of Anao, Tarlac. This evaluation can be used as reference by the local officials to improve the delivery of basic services, their local governance and autonomy, their health and sanitation programs, as well as their livelihood development projects.

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