Civic Engagement in Policy Development at the Local Government Level
The Case of Naga City, Philippines

JESSE M. ROBREDO
Mayor, Naga City

7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government
Vienna, Austria, June 26-29, 2007
# Showcase initiatives

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Confidence building</strong></td>
<td>Empowering the urban poor through the Kaantabay sa Kauswagan program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Institution building</strong></td>
<td>Broadening, deepening democratic space through the Naga City People’s Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Continuous improvement</strong></td>
<td>The Naga Governance Model (NGM) and its Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ i-Governance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ MDG-aligned local planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Outcomes and insights</strong></td>
<td>Conclusions drawn from the Naga experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Kaantabay mechanics**

- Conceptually, program is a form of social housing. Its core is securing tenurial rights for urban poor beneficiaries.
- Accomplished by acquiring occupied landholding through various innovative schemes.
  - City government plays a critical facilitative and mediating role.
- When negotiations are completed, beneficiaries amortize homelots under very affordable terms through community mortgage.
- When landholding is fully paid up, property rights to individual homelots are transferred to beneficiaries.
Engagement strategies

- **Community organizing** – A necessary first step
  - Around 80 urban poor associations belonging to the Naga City Urban Poor Federation (NCUPF) today, compared with the only nine in 1989
  - Gave voice to urban poor sector in local governance processes

- **Tripartism** - Mechanism that enables involved parties to sit down and cooperate in solving disputes. Includes:
  - city government, other national government agencies;
  - urban poor associations, aided by NGOs and POs; and
  - private landowners
At city level

- **Naga City Urban Development and Housing Board** - defines, monitors and evaluates city’s urban development directions
  - Sets policies governing Kaantabay program
  - Composed of 20 members, half comes from government, other half from civil society. Equal sharing by NGO and NCUPF representatives

- **Naga City People’s Council (NCPC)** - federation of local NGOs and POs
  - Mandated to partner with city government under Empowerment Ordinance of 1997
NGO-PO Council

- **Precursor** of the Naga City People’s Council
  - A loose coalition of NGOs and POs which sought to work with City Hall in maximizing potentials of the LGC
  - Initiated city’s engagement with local NGOs and POs
- Facilitated by “open” city hall
  - Built up confidence among progressive sector
  - Affirming advantages of being inclusive and participative on the part of the city government
Institutionalizing engagement

- **Multi-level consultation mechanisms**
  - Specific sectors, groups, or the entire constituency can participate in identifying and affirming developmental priorities

- **Referendum on development issues**
  - On August 6, 1993, Naga pioneered a citywide referendum when three development issues were submitted to Nagueños for decision
  - Demonstrated that participation even at this scale works

- **The Empowerment Ordinance and the Naga City People’s Council**
  - Through landmark legislation, a system of partnership was established encouraging federation of NGOs and POs into the Naga City People’s Council (NCPC)
  - Institutionalized system of self-regulation among NGOs and POs in the city
Naga City People’s Council

- **Appoints NGO representatives** to local special bodies of the City Government
- Observes, votes and participates in the deliberation, conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of projects, programs and activities of the City Government
- Proposes legislation, participates and votes at the committee level of the Sanggunian, and
- Acts as the people's representatives in the exercise of their constitutional right to information
NCPC in policymaking

Selects own representatives to the following entities:

Local special bodies under 1991 LGC
- Development Council
- Health Board
- Peace and Order Council
- School Board
- Bids and Awards Committee

Other mandated special bodies
- Investment Board
- Housing and Urban Development Board
- Other sectoral councils
- Other task forces, committees and other bodies created by the city government

Other mandated special bodies
- Rules and Privileges
- Blue Ribbon
- Appropriations
- Infrastructure
- Land Use
- Social Development
- Education
- Health
- Agriculture
- Trade and Industry
- Market Affairs
- Public Safety
- Youth Development
- Manpower Development
- Sports Development
- Laws, Ordinances and Reorganization
- Barangay (Village) Affairs
- Tourism and Foreign Relations
- Public Utilities
- Cooperatives
- Culture and Heritage
- Family
- Games and Amusement
- Consumers’ Protection
- Women
- Public Affairs and Information
- Environment and Ecology
- Children
- Urban Poor
- External Affairs
- NGO/PO Accreditation

31 Standing Committees of the City Council
Naga Governance Model

A guiding framework evolved from city’s own experience

- Enables city to tap community resources, multiplying capability and enabling it to overcome resources constraints.
- A function of leadership which local administration must provide. Seeks to build prosperity for the community at large.
- Ensures long-term sustainability by generating broad-based stakeholdership and community ownership over local undertakings.
**i-Governance Program**

- Identifies, uses various tools to encourage participation in government decision-making by *individual citizens and households*.
- Concretize governance principles of *transparency and accountability*.

**DELIVERY MECHANISMS**

1. **Analog or paper-based tools.** Addresses need of around 67% of population without ICT access.
   - Performance Pledges
   - Citizens Board
   - Naga City Citizens Charter
2. **Digital or ICT media (eGoverance)**
   - *naga.gov initiative*, through the city’s website [www.naga.gov.ph](http://www.naga.gov.ph)
3. **Mobile Governance.** Cellphones which have higher penetration rate than dial-up internet. Around 67% of households own a mobile.
   - TxtNaga
4. **Network access improvement.** Addresses digital divide through strategic IT investments.
   - Cyberschools
   - Cyberbarangays
The Citizens Charter
GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

- A guidebook on 130 key services being delivered by the City Government to customers
  - Procedure
  - Response time
  - Personnel responsible for each service
  - Requirements checklist to facilitate service delivery
  - Schedule of fees (if applicable)
  - Location maps sketching office/s handling the service

- A “contract” that can be enforced through feedback
  - Provides for customer feedback form
  - Directory of city hall agencies
City website

- Maximizes web technology
  - Within reach of local resources and capability in a developing country
  - Offers access to information on Naga, including city government financial reports
    - proposed and approved annual operating budget
    - quarterly financial statements
    - bid tenders, and bidding outcomes
  - Platform for communicating requests and complaints in cost-effective and efficient manner
- Contains a digital version of the Charter (called NetServe) and the Citizens Board
Participative planning

◻ Adopt the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** and the **Public Governance System (PGS) vision-mission statement and scorecards** as plan targets
  ◻ No need to reinvent the wheel and go through time-consuming visioning process

◻ **Sectoral planning.** Taps 16 existing mandated councils in coming up with sectoral components of local plans
  ◻ There is already more than adequate GO-CSO representation
PGS Roadmap for Naga

Vision
Maogmang Naguneño sa Maogmang Lugar

Constituency
- Reduced poverty incidence
- Improved access to basic services
- Enhanced quality of life thru livable communities
- Good governance and responsible citizenship

Internal Processes
- Predictable and transparent processes
- Prompt and responsive service
- Networked Information

Resources
- Expanded and diversified revenue base
- Efficient revenue collection
- Partnership with private sector civil society

City Hall
- Mission driven employees
- Culture of innovation and continuous improvement
- Focus on results aligned with vision

The Naga City Road Map to 2015
Outcomes

- Naga is **nationally and internationally recognized for its innovations**
  - All redound to more transparent local authority, quality yet cost-effective public services, vibrant and inclusive urban community, and participative society of empowered citizens

- In 2006, UNDP selected Naga as **one of the 10 leading-edge Philippine local communities in attaining MDGs**

- A progress monitoring report commissioned by Philippine national government showed **Naga either already attained or is on track towards attaining all MDG indicators**
Lessons learned

- **Confidence building** critical at the outset
- Local society must secure **strong voice**
- **Variety of civic engagement mechanisms exist**, one often building up on others
- **Local planning and budgeting** can further institutionalize participation
- Civic engagement must form part of the **institutional development agenda**