

# Satisfaction on Localized Services: A Basis of the Citizen-Driven Priority Action Plan

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**Abstract** – *The Municipality of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur, like all local government units in the Philippines, is a recognizable entity that provides services to its constituents. Through a mixed methods research design, this study determined the: level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the citizens on the service delivery areas; citizens' general attitude towards the LGU; and priority initiatives of the LGU to address the findings of the study. The researchers presented the survey findings to the local officials and heads of the different offices through a utilization conference. The various heads of offices will formulate their citizen-driven priority action plan (CPAP) to come up with initiatives to address the salient results. The level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction on the localized services of the respondents of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur is generally high, being proud to be citizens, and have chosen to stay in the Municipality. These results were bases on the already existing programs, projects, and activities of the local government unit. They crafted additional initiatives that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bounded.*

**Keywords:** *localized services, satisfaction, citizen-driven, action plan*

## 1. Introduction

At this age of a technologically advancing world, humanity faces diversified choices, opportunities, and challenges. There will be higher standards, and satisfaction becomes subjective. Consequently, formal and informal organizations continue to offer services to meet the clientele's demands. This study defines satisfaction as a feeling of contentment by the residents with all the eight services provided by the LGU administration.

The local government unit (LGU) is a formal government organization created as provided in Republic Act No. 7610, also known as the Local Government Code of the Philippines. The code mandates services like health, education, social welfare, governance and response, public works and infrastructure, environmental management, and economic and investment promotion. The Caoayan LGU, just like other LGUs, has localized services that serve as the basis of determining the residents' satisfaction through the citizen satisfaction index system (CSIS). The Municipal

Local Government Office provided localized services.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) serves as the supervisory arm of these LGUs; one of its roles is good housekeeping and good governance of these LGUs. Through this, the Seal of Good Housekeeping and Seal of Good Local Governance serves as prestigious awards for deserving LGUs. To complement said awards, the CSIS is another mechanism that aims to improve the service delivery of the LGU. The citizen priority action plan (CPAP) improves each department unit of the Municipality.

The Municipality of Caoayan is a fourth class municipality in the province of Ilocos Sur, Philippines, with a population of 19,861 distributed in 17 barangays. Due to its geographical location, fishing has been the source of livelihood for the townfolks. Next, is agriculture, as farmers planted onions, tomatoes, rice, and corn bound. The town is also known for

its loom-weaving industry, which dates back before the Spanish regime. Palafox and Associates have declared Caoayan as the fish-bowl and onion basket of Ilocos Sur.

Caoayan is also presently riding on Vigan's coattails, declared one of the world's new Seven Wonders Cities. To get a fair share of the city's tourist influx, Caoayan opened the Pinakbet Farm in Barangay Nansuagao, offering the quintessential Ilokano dish, Pinakbet, as its centerpiece. The Caoayan Choco Surf Point opens in Barangay Manangat. It is a resort-type destination that offers surfing and other water-based sports classes. It offers rejuvenating massage, Black Sand exfoliating rub, and has a resto-bar where drinks and seafood paella is served. These tourism-based projects have been launched to achieve the town's vision of improving all 'Caoayanos' living standards through additional revenue and employment.

The LGU had garnered several awards as the 2018 National Anti-Drug Council Performance Award (Silver Award), Seal of Good Local Governance from 2015 to 2017, Seal of Child Friendly Local Governance from 2014 to 2016, Business-Friendliness and Competitiveness Award for having the 36<sup>th</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class Category and 161<sup>st</sup> in Overall Municipalities in 2016, and Top 100 in Fish Program last 2015 (Reotutar, 2019).

This study was conducted to disseminate DILG's mechanism in promoting peace and order, ensuring public safety, and strengthening local government units' capability in delivering essential services to the citizenry. It is also to disseminate the satisfactory performance of the Caoayan LGU and disseminate the satisfaction level of the residents on specific areas of services.

The Oxford Dictionaries defined satisfaction as fulfilling one's wishes, expectations, or needs, or the pleasure received.

The conduct of this study is substantial to determine the compliance of the Caoayan LGU in the mandate to provide essential services that are responsive to the needs of their citizens as stated in Section 16 of the Local Government Code of 1991, to wit:

Every local government unit shall exercise power expressly granted, those necessarily implied from there, and powers necessary, appropriate, or incidental for its efficient and effective governance. That is essential to the promotion of the general welfare.

The compliance also contributes to the fulfillment of our country's sustainable development goals (SDGs) and of our Constitution, particularly on Articles X11 (National Economy and Patrimony), X111 (Social Justice and Human Rights), and XIV (Education, Science, and Technology, Arts, Culture and Sports).

The result of this study is significant to 1) the *different departments* of Sto. Domingo to help them craft policies for better and more effective programs/projects/activities leading to better service delivery performance, 2) the Sto. Domingo *Executive Official* for he/she can get ideas on how or what is needed to get the pulse of the people towards their trust and confidence on the administration's capability, 3) the *residents* as their database on the situation and condition of their LGU as a result of the service delivery of the executive officers and different department heads, and 4) the *Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)* as a consolation for pushing the CSIS as a way of measuring the performance of Sto. Domingo LGU in delivering effective, efficient, and needed service.

### 1.1. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to collect and generate relevant citizens' feedback on the local government unit of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur. Specifically, it sought to determine the: 1) level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the citizens on the service delivery areas; 2) citizens general attitude towards the LGU; and 3) priority initiatives of the LGU to address the findings of the study.

### 1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study stands on the theory that the citizen-priority action plan (CPAP) is strongly influenced

by the residents' level of satisfaction with the localized services delivered by the LGU administration. Further, it explains that the residents' level of satisfaction with the localized services delivered by the LGU administration results in the CPAP of the different departments of the LGU, which will serve as the essential services of said LGU respond to the needs of the residents.

Google.com (2017) cited that a citizen-driven priority action plan (CPAP) was formulated to maximize the agenda-setting of the local government's economic and human development interventions.

The DILG (2016) posted a memorandum circular from the Secretary of the DILG to all city mayors and regional directors concerned, stressing the conduct of utilization conferences. Whereby citizen-driven priority actions are to be formulated by the LGU officials or department heads to identify development intentions that LGUs deemed to respond to or rectify the suggested gaps identified from the Citizen Satisfaction Index System.

Transglobe (2020) posted that Localized Services or Localization is the process of adapting a product or service to a chosen locale.

Cambridge English Dictionary defines satisfaction as a pleasant feeling when he receives something he wanted or has done something he wanted to do.

Alulod (2019) conducted a study on local government service delivery in Verde Island, Batangas City, health, support to education, social welfare, governance and response, public works and infrastructure, environmental management, and economic and investment promotion. It showed that a relatively lower extent in the delivery of services, namely, physical resources such as vehicles, communication equipment, computers, financial resources, and competent personnel for the services, is inadequate. Also, citizens have not received needed services within the given period; physical resources are of lower quality. There is no cordial partnership and coordination between the local government and the private/business sector.

Ursulom et al. (2017) reported that the CSIS Result of Vigan City posted a high level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction in all the

service areas). As their general attitude towards the LGU, the citizens claimed that they were proud to be residents and preferred to stay for the next five years.

Ursulom, et al. (2018) also found out that in Sto. Domingo, the same findings as in Vigan City regarding their general attitude towards the LGU resulted.

Guided by the same methodology, this study aimed to collect and generate relevant citizens' feedback on the local government unit of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur. As a consistent Seal of Good Local Governance awardee, it dealt with the: 1) level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the citizens on the service delivery areas; 2) citizens general attitude towards the LGU; and 3) priority initiatives of the LGU to address the findings of the study. The results are beneficial to the LGU as it captures the people's pulse towards achieving responsiveness; strengthens its decisions on policies and programs that focus on services deemed to be areas of development, and provide a basis in crafting a citizen-driven priority action plan.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method utilized a survey following the process of multi-stage probability sampling.

### **2.2. Subjects of the Study**

The respondents of the study composed of 150 households. The formula in estimating sample size for an infinite population with 8% margin of error and 95% confidence level. The first sampling stage determines the total population of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur based on the 2015 Philippine Statistics Authority National Census results (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019). After which, 17 barangays were identified to comprise 30 sample spots, each with five respondents. Following a spot map, sample households were determined with a random start. After identifying the household, a

Kish Grid was used to determine who would answer the household members' survey questionnaire. On the other hand, the qualitative method required the processing of verbatim answers into a thematic presentation. Only those who availed of the services were asked of their level of satisfaction in the service area.

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

Frequency count and percentage were used. The level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the citizens are high if 50.00-100% was satisfied; it is low when it only reached 1.00-49.99%.

### **2.4. Ethical Considerations**

There was no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study. Privacy and confidentiality were observed by safeguarding the participants' identity by considering code numbers for hard and soft/electronic copies; a password will only access the latter. The disposal of these copies shall be through shredding and deletion from the desktop computer, respectively, after two years. Since the respondents are 18 years old and above, their participation was confirmed by a complete and duly approved Informed Consent Form. The study used multi-stage probability sampling with the following criteria: 1) at least 18 years of age, 2) 75 males and 75 females, and 3) a resident of the LGU for at least six months. The LGU will be significantly benefitted as it sheds light on the formulation of a citizen-driven action plan.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1. Level of Awareness, Availment, and Satisfaction of Respondents**

The summary of the level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the respondents in the service delivery areas is presented in Table 1.

As presented in the service delivery area on health, the citizens were highly aware of the services, namely: vaccination of infants/children, pre-natal/post-natal/childbirth services, free general consultations/access to secondary and

tertiary healthcare, free necessary medicine or low-cost medicine program, prevention and management of communicable and non-communicable diseases, basic dental/oral hygiene, and family planning/reproductive health, distribution of reproductive health supplies, information dissemination and other services as they highly avail of these services. Among those who availed were also highly satisfied.

Along education support, the citizens were highly aware of the services, explicitly providing medical and or nutritional services to school clinics, sports programs and activities, scholarships and other assistance programs for students, and alternative learning systems and other special education programs. However, they offered a low availment on scholarships and other assistance programs for students, alternative learning systems, and other special education programs. This might be because few of the respondents have no more children in public schools in the locality. Also, among those who availed of the services claimed that they were delighted.

On social welfare, the citizens were highly aware of the services: child and youth welfare program, women's welfare program, persons with disabilities (PWDs) welfare program, older persons/senior citizens program, family and community welfare program, and programs for internally displaced persons. However, the level of availment was low on these services: women's welfare program, persons with disabilities (PWDs) welfare program, and programs for internally displaced persons because only a few of the respondents have household members who are senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWD) and others belonging to the vulnerable sector. However, among those who availed of the services said that they were delighted.

For governance and response service delivery area, the citizens were highly aware of the programs and activities to wit: delivery of frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.), local government's response or action on complaints against an officer, official, or personnel in the LGU, mobile LGU services/provision of municipal services to the barangays, conflict and

**Table 1.** Level of Awareness, Availment, and Satisfaction of the Service Delivery Areas

Service Delivery Areas	Awareness			Availment			Satisfaction		
	F (n=150)	%	Description	F (n=150)	%	Description	F (n=150)	%	Description
A. Health	137	91.33	High	131	87.33	High	131	87.33	High
B. Support to Education	129	86.00	High	58	38.67	Low	150	100.00	High
C. Social Welfare	126	84.00	High	59	39.33	Low	144	96.00	High
D. Governance and Response	141	94.00	High	116	77.33	High	148	98.67	High
E. Public Works and Infrastructure	141	94.00	High	118	78.67	High	136	90.67	High

dispute resolution in the barangays, timely response on peace and order and public safety-related incidents, traffic management, disaster risk reduction, and management, and public information services. Moreover, they have a high level of availment of these services; they also exhibited high satisfaction.

Along with public works and infrastructure, the citizens had high awareness, high availment, and high satisfaction on the following programs and activities: barangay roads, municipal roads and bridges, barangay hall, multipurpose halls or civic centers, public markets and satellite markets, public parks and open spaces, road safety, sports centers and facilities, municipal government buildings and public cemetery.

On environmental management, the citizens had high awareness, high availment, and high satisfaction on the following programs and activities: community-based greening projects, air pollution control program, solid waste management, wastewater management, and clean-up programs/projects.

For economic and investment promotion, the citizens were highly aware of the programs and activities such as public employment services, regulation and supervision of businesses, promotion of barangay micro business enterprises, livelihood programs, development and maintenance of tourist attractions and facilities, product/brand marketing and promotion of local goods and tourist attractions, organization, accreditation, and training of tourism-related

concessions, access to irrigation facilities or equipment, prevention, and control of plant and animal pests and diseases; fish kills and diseases, distribution of planting/farming/fishing materials and or equipment, water, and soil resource utilization and conservation projects, post-harvest facilities, i.e., crop dryers, slaughterhouses or fish processing facilities, and accessible farm harvest buying/trading stations, and enforcement of fishery laws in municipal waters. Nonetheless, low availment on the following services: public employment services, regulation, and supervision of businesses, promotion of barangay micro business enterprises, livelihood programs, organization, accreditation and training of tourism-related concessions, access to irrigation facilities or equipment, prevention, and control of plant and animal pests and diseases; fish kills and diseases, distribution of planting/farming/fishing materials and or equipment, water, and soil resource utilization and conservation projects, post-harvest facilities such as crop dryers, slaughterhouses or fish processing facilities, accessible farm harvest buying/trading stations, and enforcement of fishery laws in municipal waters, because only a small percentage of the respondents have businesses, tourism-related activities and there are those belonging to the agricultural sector. Only those who availed claimed that they have high satisfaction with the services.

Generally, these findings corroborated with Ursulom et al. (2017) and Ursulom et al. (2018),

where the level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction was described as high. However, this study's findings contradict Alulod (2019), where the delivery of services was at a relatively lower extent.

## 2. Citizens Over-all Attitude towards the LGU

Most of the respondents (143; 95.33%) claimed that the local government's services greatly benefitted them. Because of this, almost all of the respondents (147; 98.00%) choose to stay in the LGU as they are proud to be residents. For those who prefer to stay in the Municipality, the top three reasons were: *ditoy nakayyanakanmin* (we were born here) (51; 34.69%), *resident nak ditoy* (I am a resident here) (35; 23.81%), and *as-asideg pagsapulan* (It is near my workplace) (31; 21.09%). Only 13 or 8.84% of the respondents will stay because of the local government's good service (*mayat servisyo ti LGU*).

On the contrary, only 3 or 2.00% will choose to transfer to another municipality because of the following reasons: As time passes by corruption is perceivable (1; 33.33%), for greener pasture (1; 33.33%), and to work abroad (1; 33.34%).

Generally, these findings corroborated with Ursulom et al. (2017) and Ursulom et al. (2018) regarding the citizens' claim that they were proud to be residents and preferred to stay for the next five years.

## 3. Priority Initiatives to Address the Findings

Through a utilization conference, the citizen satisfaction findings were presented to local officials and heads of the local government unit's respective offices to craft a citizen-driven priority action plan (CPAP) for November 2019 to December 2020. The summary of initiatives is presented in Table 2.

As shown in the table, five priority initiatives were identified. Health services spearheaded by the municipal health office (MHO) coordinated with the provincial health office (PHO) of Ilocos Sur. These initiatives include: 1) procurement/sourcing out of medicines - representation for the increase of the budget for health in the Sangguniang Bayan for appropriation

ordinance; 2) dental Mission – Oral Health Examination to all senior citizens; 3) Optha Mission –information dissemination to all barangays; 4) Optha Mission – general check-up to all children, adults, and senior citizens; and 5) Improved advocacy campaign – Multi-media approach: Flyers, barangay visits, social media, information education campaign (IEC) materials, and through word of mouth.

Along with support to education, five priority initiatives were prioritized as 1) advocacy program – Information campaign, pulong-pulong ang barangay visits; 2) revisit guidelines on the scholarship program; 3) massive information campaign in Alternative Learning System (ALS); 4) Training Needs Assessment for high school students and identify participants for livelihood training; 5) conduct of survey on out-of-school youth (OSY) as database. The attainment of these targets will be led by the Local School Board (LSB) and the Department of Education.

In terms of social welfare services, 13 initiatives were crafted to improve service delivery with the municipal social welfare and development office (MSWDO) as the lead implementor, cooperating with line agencies and other organizations. These include: 1) strengthen the public information office: formulation of information materials like flyers, etc.; Use of social media like the creation of Facebook page; and word of mouth; 2) master listing of children and youth as database; 3) organization of PYAP; 4) conduct of Youth Camp; 5) formulation of flyers on Magna Carta for persons with disabilities (PWDs); 6) reorganization of PWD group; 7) master listing of senior citizens not included in the social pension program; 8) intensification of information dissemination on RA 9994: Formulation of Ordinance on the replication of social pension program; 8) organization of Ilocos Sur Women's Association (ISWA) in every barangay and election of officers for the Federated ISWA; 9) conduct activities in celebration of women's month; 10) attendance to Women's Congress; 11) organization of Solo Parent Women Association;

**Table 2.** Priority Initiatives of the LGU from November 2019 to December 2020

<b>Service Delivery Area</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Office/s Responsible</b>
A. Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement/sourcing out of medicines - Representation for the increase of budget for health in the Sangguniang Bayan for appropriation ordinance</li> <li>• Dental Mission – Oral Health Examination to all senior citizens</li> <li>• Optha Mission –Information Dissemination to all barangays</li> <li>• Optha Mission – General check-up to all children, adults, and senior citizens</li> <li>• Improved advocacy campaign – Multi-media approach: Flyers, barangay visits, social media, information education campaign (IEC) materials, word of mouth</li> </ul>	Municipal Health Office (MHO) Provincial Health Office (PHO) Dentists MHP
B. Support to Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy program – Information campaign, pulong-pulong ang barangay visits</li> <li>• Revisit guidelines on the scholarship program</li> <li>• Massive Information campaign in Alternative Learning System (ALS)</li> <li>• Training Needs Assessment for high school students and identify participants for livelihood training.</li> <li>• Conduct of survey on out-of-school youth (OSY) as database</li> </ul>	LGU and Local School Board (LSB) LSB LSB Department of Education (DepEd)
C. Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the public information office: formulation of information materials like flyers, etc.; Use of social media like the creation of Facebook page; and word of mouth</li> <li>• Master listing of children and youth as database</li> <li>• Organization of PYAP</li> <li>• Conduct of Youth Camp</li> <li>• Formulation of Flyers on Magna Carta for persons with disabilities (PWDs)</li> <li>• Reorganization of PWD group</li> <li>• Master listing of senior citizens not included in the social pension program</li> <li>• Intensify Information Dissemination on RA 9994: Formulation of Ordinance on the replication of social pension program</li> <li>• Organization of Ilocos Sur Women's Association (ISWA) in every barangay and election of officers for the Federated ISWA</li> <li>• Conduct Activities in celebration of Women's month</li> <li>• Attendance to Women's Congress</li> <li>• Organization of Solo Parent Women Association</li> <li>• Creation of social media accounts like FB to intensify multi-media campaign</li> <li>• Conduct of Livelihood program for women and solo parents</li> </ul>	Municipal Social Welfare Development Officer (MSWDO)/LYDO Sangguniang Kabataan (SK)
D. Governance and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct more mobile patrolling within area of responsibility daily</li> <li>• House to house distribution of information materials on disaster preparedness</li> </ul>	PNP, Barangay Tanod, BPATS MDRRMO

**Table 2.** continued... Priority Initiatives

<b>Service Delivery Area</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Office/s Responsible</b>
E. Public Works and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of new seawall</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of multipurpose sports complex</li> </ul>	Engineering Office PGIS and LGU Engineering Offices
F. Environmental Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massive information education campaign like distribution of pamphlets on solid waste management</li> <li>• Strengthen "Batog ko, Dalus ko" Program</li> </ul>	MENRO/MO/CAO/ Barangay Council/DepEd Barangay Council, MENRO, MO
G. Economic and Investment Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of irrigation facilities</li> <li>• Conduct IEC covering on-pipe CapDevs</li> <li>• Conduct of livelihood training programs</li> <li>• Intensified IEC on all priority tourism-based PPAs in 17 barangays</li> <li>• Construction of Caoayan Boardwalk</li> </ul>	DA RFO I, PGIS, LGU, NIA and BSWM Concerned NGAs, NGOs, LGU Concerned NGAs, NGOs, LGU DOT/TIEZA, PGIS, LGU Tourism Office, Engineering

12) creation of social media accounts like FB to intensify multimedia campaign; 13) conduct of livelihood program for women and solo parents.

On governance and response service delivery area, two practical initiatives were crafted as 1) conduct more mobile patrolling within the area of responsibility daily; and 2) house to house distribution of information materials on disaster preparedness, spearheaded by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Committee (MDRRMC), in partnership with the barangay council and tanods.

There are two initiatives to address the public works and infrastructure service delivery: 1) construction of new seawall; and 2) rehabilitation of multipurpose sports complex. The accomplishment of these initiatives will be from the Engineering Office in close coordination with the provincial government of Ilocos Sur (PGIS).

Also, there are two initiatives for environmental management services: 1) massive information education campaign like distribution of pamphlets on solid waste management, and 2) strengthen "Batog ko, Dalus ko" Program to be led

by the municipal environment and natural resources office, in partnership with the barangay officials and DepEd.

Along with economic and investment promotion service delivery, four initiatives were considered as 1) procurement of irrigation facilities; 2) conduct IEC covering on-pipe CapDevs; 3) conduct of livelihood training programs; 4) intensified IEC on all priority tourism-based PPAs in 17 barangays; and 5) construction of Caoayan Boardwalk. The leading implementors of these initiatives are the municipal tourism and agriculture offices, in coordination with the PGIS, national line agencies like the Department of Agriculture (DA) regional field office, National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and the Department of Tourism (DoT), and other non-government organizations.

All the initiatives crafted in all the service delivery areas were specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bounded to endure. These will be accomplished in one calendar year.

### 3. Conclusions and Recommendations

The level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction on the localized services of the respondents of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur is generally high as they are proud to be citizens and have chosen to stay in the Municipality. These results were based on strengthening the already existing programs, projects, and activities of the local government unit. They crafted additional initiatives that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bounded.

The local government unit may consider a public information office that will take charge of the information dissemination activities to promote localized services. Through this, the residents will be encouraged to avail themselves of the respective services and be satisfied with them. It must sustain the services' positive aspects and enhance specific aspects that can still be improved.

It may also acknowledge civil society organizations' (CSOs) ' role in improving the quality of services offered through a planning-workshop and commitment-setting to forge partnerships.

Regular monitoring and evaluation in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness may be carried out by the local government unit to ensure the initiatives' accomplishment.

The survey findings may also be presented in other LGUs particularly to the local chief executive, vice mayor, Sangguniang bayan members, and heads of the local government unit's different offices through a utilization conference. A planning-workshop on the formulation of a citizen-driven priority action plan (CPAP) may also be facilitated to come up with initiatives to address the salient results.

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