

# Breaking In the New Guards: Training for Local Government and Regional Administration

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*Given the need to improve training as an indispensable component of the national strategy for manpower planning and development in the Philippines, the following are considered imperative: 1) a review of training programs carried out for local government and regional administration; 2) an assessment of training needs and a redefinition of its scope and coverage; and 3) plans and strategies for improved delivery of training programs. Management, finance, and engineering are urgent and useful training areas. It is further recommended that a 5-day orientation program for all incoming officials with the involvement of training institutions be undertaken.*

## Introduction

Training has long been recognized as an important instrument of human resource development. When viewed within the context of local and regional needs of development, training can be seen as a major tool for upgrading performance in the pursuit of traditional functions of government like maintaining peace and order, tax collection, public health, as well as in efforts in promoting development-oriented capabilities.<sup>1</sup>

The need to focus attention on the training of present and incoming officials, given the task of redemocratizing local government and regional administration, stems from the recognition of their potential contribution in achieving national development goals. As a mandated national policy, it is often argued that government performance in the attainment of development objectives is influenced by all levels of government; and moreover, that effective public sector management depends on the ability of the central government to harness the resources of the lower levels of government.<sup>2</sup>

Taking that idea a step further, this paper argues that present and incoming officials should first, be familiar with new skills and knowledge to cope with the urgent demands of managing major issues, e.g., performance (ethical and moral) standards, productivity in government, and "doing more for less." The application of science and technology to development is another

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motivation for enhancing administrative capabilities to deal with complex issues. At the same time, local and regional administration, are called upon to promote and ensure popular participation, as well as to interact with a large number of institutions and individuals in the policy making process.

Secondly, the urgent need has arisen for taking a serious look to find out more systematically where we are and where we want to go with the question of management and development of local and regional administrators.<sup>3</sup>

The position taken here is that, if we are to meet the complexities of change and uncertainties in the coming years, a concerted effort is demanded on the part of training institutions and administrators alike so that both are able to decisively and effectively respond to those challenges.

This paper will: 1) review training programs carried out for local government and regional administration; 2) assess training needs and redefine its scope and coverage; and 3) recommend plans and strategies for improved delivery of training programs.

#### **Review of Training Institutions: Their Structures and Programs**

The network of leading training programs for local government and regional administration may be divided into two main categories: 1) Government-owned and government-managed institutions primarily engaged in training programs; and 2) University related institutions offering educational and training non-degree programs. Although the distinction of these categories is useful, it tends to get blurred in some cases as institutions operate in several areas simultaneously.

Private consulting firms also play a growing role in the network of training institutions. Agencies such as the World Bank (WB) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have provided training assistance to a wide variety of projects through foreign/local consultants. The project-related training component of the World Bank's loan has been an important instrument in this process. Table I summarizes the types of training, target groups, duration of training, and the types of professional staff characteristic of these categories.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Assessment of Training Needs: Redefinition of Scope and Coverage**

Recent studies<sup>5</sup> on local government training show some major perceptions of local and regional officials indicating possible directions of present and fu-

Table I. A Typology of Training Institutions for Local Government  
and Regional Administration

<i>Category</i>	<i>Types of Training</i>	<i>Target Groups</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Professional Staff</i>
Civil Service Academy (CSA-CSC) Government owned/managed	Development Managers Training (DMT); basic/current managerial inputs for local administrators development; non-degree program; classroom work/barangay based exercise	Appointive local officials; heads of departments (middle management personnel) in cities/provinces involved in development programs	3 weeks	Experienced civil servants and academic specialist
Department of Local Government, Bureau of Local Government Development/Bureau of Local Government Supervision; PDAP with USAID assistance (Government owned/managed)	Provincial development assistance in real property tax administration; equipment maintenance, financial management, HRD/rural enterprise management; non-degree classroom work and field laboratory	Appointive and technical officials of PDAP provinces and rural service centers (PDAP)	5 days to 12 weeks	Permanent training staff; visiting practitioners and academic specialists
	Local economic enterprise development, policy orientation, infrastructure development, etc.	Officer-in-charge (OIC), appointive/technical staff of local governments.	3 days to 1 week	Permanent training staff, visiting practitioners and academic specialists
Development Academy of the Philippines	Career Executive Service Development Program (CESDP), a continuing program of training and career development for government executives; classroom work and field laboratory	National/regional officials of line agencies	9 months	Visiting practitioners and academic specialists.
Local Government Center (UP-CPA) in cooperation with UP Management	Management of Rural Development Projects (MRDP); project planning, implementation and evaluation, including behavioral	Senior Personnel in national/local governments; government corporations/private sector	5 weeks of intensive course	Permanent staff, visiting practitioners and academic specialists

<i>Category</i>	<i>Types of Training</i>	<i>Target Groups</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Professional Staff</i>
Education Council and National Council on Integrated Area Development (NACIAD)	skills; classroom work and field experience			
Center for Policy and Administrative Development (UP-CPAD)	Project development as management; policy and administrative analysis, research methods, organization development, personnel/fiscal management; classroom work and field exercise	Project manager of national line agencies, including Armed Forces of the Philippines		Permanent staff; visiting practitioners and academic specialists
	Technical assistance, legal Katarungan Barangay, evaluation of policies, programs/NALGU, etc.	OICs, appointive/technical staff of local governments	1 to 4 days	Permanent staff, visiting practitioners, academic specialists
Regional Development Staff, NEDA (Government-owned/managed) assisted by IBRD/UNDP and UP Program on Development Economics	Project development, i.e., regional, interregional, sectoral, industrial state; project monitoring and evaluation, technical writing/computer use, classroom work, seminars/workshops	Regional line agency representations and local specialists involved in project development planning/implementation and evaluation	3 weeks residential 2 weeks field workshop 6 months practicum 1 week integration workshop 10 weeks	Academic specialists and practicing sectoral administrators

<i>Category</i>	<i>Types of Training</i>	<i>Target Groups</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Professional Staff</i>
Local Government Center (UP-CPA) in cooperation with DJG	Local Administration Development Program to enhance expertise in local planning, implementing and evaluating development programs, classroom work, laboratory training and field experience in selected areas	Elective officials, middle management personnel, technical staff of both local and line agencies.		Permanent training staff; visiting practitioners and academic specialists
Philippine Executive Academy now Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS)	Senior Executive Development Program which includes studies on environment of administration, employee motivation, supervision/productivity, external relations, etc. as field research on urban-rural problems; classroom work, executive panel and seminar	Senior-level executive from both the public/private sectors	12 weeks residential course	Permanent staff, visiting practitioners and academic specialists
School of Urban and Regional Planning (UP-SURP)	Special course on urban and regional planning; classroom work	Qualified personnel from public and private sectors	6 month course	Permanent staff, visiting practitioners and academic specialists

ture training programs. Such perceptions include the following:

1) Local officials who are personnel of line agencies of the national government perceive their role as active and important partners in the overall development process by being the main implementors of programs and projects initiated by the national government.

2) They view their task not only in terms of maintaining basic local governmental responsibilities but also as principal catalyst and agents of social, economic and physical development.

3) They see the expansion of their traditional roles through increased participation in areas such as promotion of local economic enterprise and industry and implementation of development projects particularly those pertaining to housing, transportation, communication, health and education; and

4) They view decentralization and local autonomy as an important, if not the key factor in strengthening the capabilities of local governments and in fostering self-reliance. In anticipation of increased decentralization, local officials expressed an urgent and critical need for training which is more responsive to local government needs, more widely available, comprehensive and continuing.

#### *Changing Needs and Demands for Training<sup>6</sup>*

From the above premises and considerations, three broad categories in relation to their developmental role may be seen as urgent and useful training areas, namely: management, finance and engineering.

Management, in this context, covers the spectrum of functions generally identified with the general administration of local government as it respond to the planning and delivery of public services. Finance includes tax legislation, revenue administration, accounting, budgeting, cash management, debt servicing and internal control. Engineering refers to planning and implementation of infrastructure and maintenance projects.

Further extrapolation of these broad categories show a number of sub-topic areas considered important. These are presented in Table II in the order of their perceived needs and priority.

**Table II. Priority List of Sub-Topic Areas for Training in Local Government**

<i>Management</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Infrastructure</i>
Development Planning	Laws/Revenue Generation	Programming/Budgeting
Strategy for Effective Delivery of Services	Collection Strategies/Techniques	Preparation of Feasibility Study
Design or System for delivery of service	Evaluation of Business Taxes, Fees or Licenses	Project Evaluation or Selection
Setting of Objective (MBO)	Tax Consciousness Program	Land use Planning or Zoning
Monitoring and evaluation	Revenue/Expenditure, Planning and Forecasting	Project Economic Analysis and Optimization technique
Training/Career planning	Local Government Accounting and Auditing	
Resource evaluation	Budget Preparation	
Personnel Selection	Financial Analysis	
Development Appraisal	Revenue Records	
Development Attitudes	Management	
Implementation	Real Property Tax Mapping	
Analysis of Property	Real Property Tax Valuation/Assessment	
Motivation/Morale		
Costing of projects/services		

### *Main Features of Training Categories*

The main features of some training programs representing University and government owned/managed institutions which are particularly designed to enhance development-oriented knowledge and skills for local administration include: 1) the Local Administration and Development Program (LADP) of the Local Government Center, University of the Philippines-College of Public

Administration (UP-CPA); 2) the Systems Operation for Local Institution Development (SOLID); 3) the Development Managers Training (DMT); and 4) the Regional Planning Project.

1) The Local Administration and Development Program (LADP) of the Local Government Center, UP-CPA is part of a package of training, research and consultancy services for various local government units. It has been in existence for the past twenty years and is developed in close collaboration with the Department of Local Government (DLG) in planning the overall direction of the training program.

The LADP is a ten-week course developed for senior local government executives, administrators and field officials of national agencies to strengthen their understanding of the broad environmental changes to which they relate as decision makers. The program has four objectives, namely: 1) to improve the quality of local administration through a continuing program of training for local officials; 2) to assist in the administrative improvement of local government through organization and management studies and consultancy; 3) to contribute to the study and augmentation of literature on local government through a continuing program of research; and 4) to collaborate with and render technical assistance to administrative agencies and academic institutions, both local and international, in their efforts and activities to improve the administration of local governments. However, many local officials have not yet been invited to undergo this type of training program.

2) Initiated by the Bureau of Local Government Development (BLGD) of the DLG, the Systems Operation for Local Institution Development (SOLID) represents a comprehensive and continuing program for local government development. It is geared towards the development of administrative and technical capabilities of local governments. In pursuing this objective, SOLID utilizes a four-pronged approach which consists of local assistance, local government project development assistance, local government research and materials development. Other related programs conducted by the BLGD include: specialized courses on Local Administration and Reforms, Local Management and Development Resources, Self-Instruction Course on Local Administration Packages, General Leadership and Administrative Development and the Barangay Executive Training.

3) The Development Managers Training (DMT) is a regular course of the Civil Service Academy of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for local government executives—middle management officials and technical personnel involved in the administration of development programs. A special feature of this program which is also carried out by other leading training institutions, is the barangay-based exercise. In other programs, this training technique is sometimes known as "community outreach," "rural immersion," or "social



laboratory." The inclusion of this exercise in the course of studies is intended to infuse in the participants a sense of commitment to the upliftment of the poor in the rural areas.<sup>7</sup>

4) The Regional Planning Project<sup>8</sup> is carried out by the Regional Development Staff of the Planning and Policy Office of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). Its main thrust includes: initiation, monitoring, coordination and/or integration of regional planning and development efforts in the country. The program has institutionalized preparation of countryside regional profile as well as medium and prospective development plans and designs for appropriate tools and methodologies, and for strengthening knowledge and skills in regional planning.

Assistance in the implementation of this program is provided by the United Nations for Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) under a NEDA-UNDP/IBRD assistance package.

### **Policies, Plans and Strategies**

The review of programs carried out by various institutions as well as the assessment of current needs and programs of local government and regional administration reflects a changing perception of local government functions. A shift from a basically political approach of local administration to a more development-oriented one is evident. Until very recently, local government pre-occupation focused on the maintenance of basic governmental and administrative functions. Local programs were geared mainly to the sustenance of political patronage and power bases. Thus, very little comprehensive development was being undertaken since the bulk of governmental benefits was earmarked for favored political bailiwicks.

The review, further manifested a serious concern for development which clearly demonstrated a critical demand for technical skills required for such development. This shows that local executives and administrators have taken cognizance of the real and often varied needs of their constituents and have indicated a high interest and motivation for some measures of performance and achievement in meeting these demands. In other areas, training programs offered for both national and local officials have focused on the development of skills in the functional aspects of administration such as budgeting and accounting, personnel, and organization and methods. In recent years, with the advent of development planning, courses on project appraisal and management have been added to these traditional subjects.

Apart from the use of specialized tools and technologies, theories of organization largely based on concepts and application of behavioral sciences, are now found in a number of training curricula.

### *Policy and Program Areas*

Ideally, a training policy, not only for national but local and regional programs, should state the objectives and scope of all training activities, approaches to training needs assessment, the priorities and financing arrangements, the roles and functions of different categories of institutions and mechanisms for coordinating their work, linkages of training to career planning and development, and guidelines for the monitoring and evaluation of training.<sup>9</sup> Training policies must be based on a careful assessment of future national tasks and manpower requirements. Publicly declared policies help employees understand the development opportunities available to them. For those who manage training in local/regional government, policies provide a framework within which to plan their programs, seek resources, and guide and evaluate performance.

Some broad policy areas that should be addressed by training programs for incoming officials in local government and regional administration involve the redefinition of their role and functions in the priority programs of government, i.e., on agrarian reform, communist insurgency and national security, social justice and human rights and economic recovery. Greater attention and concern must be focused on accountability, moral re-orientation, ethical values and behavior of local officials. Moreover, with increasing interest on autonomous regions, there is a need for a training policy for understanding the concept and strategy of intergovernmental relationships and the allocation of governmental functions and revenue resources. The main concern here is to provide the present and incoming officials with broad perspectives, understanding and commitment to the resolution of the issues and problems confronting the country today.

In addition to the above policy areas, the identified programs as presented in Table II should also be considered as course content of training programs for incoming local government and regional administrators. As already pointed out, they fall under the training categories of general management, finance and infrastructure. Obviously, the preparation of the course design must be preceded by a systematic analysis of local/regional/ autonomous institutional requirements and needs of participants in order to ensure relevance and responsiveness of the training program.

### **Conclusion**

Training for local government and regional administration needs to be seen as part of a national strategy for manpower planning and development.

Hence, it must be a policy and program component in the consideration or allocation of scarce administrative resources. Without vigorous and continuing central government initiatives, training management, particularly for new officials at lower levels, is unlikely to be carried out. The holding of a five-day orientation program for all incoming officials is highly recommended taking into account the involvement of training institutions identified in this paper, with the Department of Local Government as the lead institution. An institutionalized and continuing training program addressed to specific needs of local/regional officials and staff will help bring about a more relevant and responsive local governments.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>See *Survey of Training Needs of Local Governments*, conducted by the Local Government Center, University of the Philippines, College of Public Administration (UP-CPA) for the Bureau of Local Government, DLGCD (1974), p. 1. See also, Samuel Paul, "Training for Public Administration and Management in Developing Countries: A Review," *World Bank Staff Working Paper* Number 584 (Washington, D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 1984), p.7.

<sup>2</sup>Cochrane Glynn, "Policies for Strengthening Local Government in Developing Countries," *World Bank Staff Working Paper* Number 582 (Washington, D.C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 1983), p.1.

<sup>3</sup>See Report on "Interregional Workshop on the Role of Staff Colleges and Institutes of Public Administration in Developing Senior Administrators," UN Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, held in Lahore, Pakistan, April 20-26, 1987, pp. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup>Angelito F. Santos, "Strengthening Project Development Capabilities at the Subnational Levels in the Philippines: A Perspective of a Regional Development Institution," *Philippine Budget Management* (1983), pp. 115-116.

<sup>5</sup>See *Interim Report: Municipal Training Program*, Bureau of Local Government Development, MLG, October 1985.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>Nieves S. Espiritu, "The Barangay-Based Exercise as a Training Technique: The Concept and Issues," a seminar workshop report conducted by the Management Education Council, U.P. *The Information Exchange and Systems on Human Resource Development*, CSC, Vol. II, No. 3, (September 1980).

<sup>8</sup>Santos, "Strengthening Project Development...", *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>9</sup>Samuel Paul, "Training for...", *op. cit.*, p. 30.