



## **Organizational Maturity and Evaluation of DILEEP Projects: The Case of PARBUF-MPC in Kiblawan, Davao Del Sur**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author LAAP conceptualized the research problem, identified the appropriate methods, administered the questionnaire to and interviewed the respondents, performed the appropriate protocols and wrote the results and discussion. Author GMVB served as adviser, guided the theoretical accounts, performed the statistical analysis, performed proofreading and critique of the paper.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** This study intends to explore Pasig Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries and Upland Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PARBUF-MPC) organizational maturity and its implications to the implementation of the Dole Integrated Livelihood Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP) projects in terms of the dimensions project management, financial management, organizational management, technical assistance and beneficiaries' well-being.

**Study Design:** This study is anchored on the organizational maturity model which reflects a framework that defines maturity as an aggregate of incremental capabilities prerequisite to effective organizational project management. Using the convergent mixed methods research

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design, quantitative and qualitative data strands were collected and analyzed to achieve the objectives of the study.

**Place and Duration of Study:** This study was conducted in Pasig, Kiblawan, Davao del Sur for the period Jan 2017 to December 2018. Data were gathered from 119 member beneficiaries of PARBUF-MPC.

**Methodology:** Organizational maturity was measured using a 35-item, 5-point scale-type instrument, while project implementation was diagnosed using a survey with some close-ended items. These were administered to 119 members of the cooperative who were also beneficiaries of the DILEEP projects particularly on hog raising, banana chips making and rubber cultivation. The quantitative responses were gathered and analyzed using averages and frequency. The qualitative data consist of responses to open-ended questions and were analyzed to reveal themes from beneficiaries' experiences on the project implementation and management.

**Results:** Results indicate the cooperative's level of organizational maturity obtained an overall mean of 3.62. This level of organizational maturity is verbally described as predictable, which means that the organization's defined processes are performed consistently in practice, with defined control limits to achieve its goals. Project implementation on the other hand was identified by the respondents to be established under project management, financial management and technical assistance while organizational management was described as not established. Qualitative remarks of the responses also revealed particular themes under each dimension of project implementation. The responses were processed and classified into two themes which are the positive and the negative feedbacks. Beneficiaries' well-being as the fifth dimension of project implementation revealed themes like women empowerment and improvement in the quality of lives.

**Conclusion:** Essentially, the gaps in the implementation in the projects like banana chips making, hog raising and rubber cultivation were identified.

*Keywords: Organizational maturity; mixed-method design; project evaluation.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Development as a discourse is multidimensional. Leaders and practitioners' debate over how development can be inclusive to factor in economic, social and environmental dimensions. Social development aims to improve the access of Filipinos to quality basic social service delivery in education, training and culture, health and nutrition, population and development, housing, social protection and asset reform. Social development also ensures an enabling policy environment for inclusive growth, poverty reduction, convergence of service delivery, maximized synergies and active stakeholder participation.

In context, majority of Asian countries remain essentially agrarian and there exist differences in agrarian structures among and within these countries. Land distribution is not enough to lift the farmers from poverty [1]. Concomitant with land distribution is the responsibility of helping agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) to make their lands productive forever raising incomes. Agrarian reforms in the form of government interventions have had the objectives of accelerating social change, achieving greater

equity in the agrarian structure and improving agricultural productivity.

The Philippines is on track in pursuing the sustainable development goals, particularly on reducing poverty, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities and partnerships. In 1993, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) adopted the strategy of Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs) as a key strategy for sustainable rural development.

The DAR collaborated with other government agencies to provide the necessary support services such as organization, building and strengthening ARBs, farmers organizations, infrastructure facilities, appropriate farming technologies, credit and marketing assistance. One of the key government agencies partnered by DAR was the Department of Labor and Employment. It is responsible for labor market governance and primarily concerned with the protection of workers and promoting their welfare.

In order to contribute to the government agenda of inclusive growth through massive job generation and poverty reduction, the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency

Employment Program (DILEEP) was implemented. DILEEP particularly seeks to contribute to poverty reduction and reduce vulnerability of the poor and marginalized workers, either through transitional emergency employment and promotion of entrepreneurship and community enterprises.

The focus of DILEEP is the welfare of the informal sector and its role in economic development. It is evident that most of them are poor and are caught in the vicious cycle of poverty, indebtedness, asset lessness and low income. This link between informality and poverty was forwarded by Peruvian economist Hernando de Sotoas. In his work, *Wining Informality*, de Sotoas asserted that a solution to free these informal workers from the vicious cycle of poverty is by directly linking them to funding agencies like DOLE.

Barangay Pasig of the Kiblawan town in Davao del Sur is an Agrarian Reform Community. From the 300 hectares of land distributed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, 3.36 hectares was awarded to Pasig Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries and Upland Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PARBUF-MPC). At present, the cooperative is engaged in various livelihood projects funded by DILEEP which include banana chips making, vegetables, rubber and fruit trees, livestock raising, food processing, furniture making, bagsakan and grocery store and cosmetology and dressmaking. The lands were developed for productive use and were planted with rubber, banana and fruit trees.

In order to assist implementers to organize their work so that it is really based on real needs, is well planned, monitored and evaluated, a comprehensive ex-post evaluation of the projects of DILEEP is deemed appropriate. To carry out this evaluation, this study thus aims to explore PARBUF-MPC's organizational maturity and its implications to the implementation of the DILEEP projects. Understanding the current level of maturity is something which every organization should be concerned about. Without adequate levels of maturity, processes, functions and decisions cannot be performed robustly. This study would also allow other parties to learn from the projects for the improvement of future work or enable adjustment to changing circumstances.

### **1.1 Theoretical Framework**

A maturity model is a framework with constituent parts that defines maturity in the areas of

interest, specifically organizational project management. The model describes the aggregate incremental capabilities which are a prerequisite to effective organizational project management.

In national government agencies, many standards have been set to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in delivering products and services in a better, faster, and cheaper way. The problems faced by government organizations today require solutions which call for an integrated approach and the effective management of organizational resources to be able to achieve objectives and expected benefits. Project management carried out by funding agencies is not an exemption to these continuous improvement of systems.

Project management is a composite activity with multiple dimensions. The Project Management Institute states that a project is "a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a product, service or result", and Association for Project Management (APM) emphasizes that projects are "unique and transitory accomplishments, performed to achieve a desired outcome" [2].

A project is a temporary organization to which resources are assigned to do a job and to deliver a beneficial change [3]. The purpose of project management is to support the execution of an organization's competitive strategy to deliver a desired result (time-to-market, high quality, low-cost products) [4]. Project management is thus a process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered, in such a way that ensures that agreed benefits are realized [2].

The concept of organizational project management is based on the idea that there is a correlation between an organization's capability in project, program and portfolio management, and its effectiveness in implementing strategy [5].

The evolution from the simple "iron triangle" of cost, schedule and quality, through to achieving benefits for the organization and for the stakeholders was pointed by Pinto [6]. While it is true that project success is dependent on the perceptions of stakeholders, there is probably no "absolute success" in project management, but only a "perceived success". They observed in their study that projects that did not meet the original goals of the "iron triangle" criteria, were not necessary perceived by the different stakeholders as failure projects [7].

A survey of researches in project success and has developed three themes among them [8]. First, studies have identified factors that contributed to project success. Second, research has identified other contingency variables that might impact project outcomes, such as: project size, project type, life cycle stage, project management complexity, and strategic versus operational mindsets. The third stream is the combination of the other two and the main objective is to define the criteria by which a project is judged to be a success or a failure. Projects have multiple stakeholders who hold different perspectives on the project's purpose and who have different expectations of what the project needs to achieve [9].

The last decades have experienced a gradual understanding that project success requires a broader definition than project management success [10]. The right project will succeed almost without the success of project management, but successful project management could enhance its success [11].

For organizations to succeed in the global business competition of today, they need to produce a high standard of performance. The purpose of maturity models is to provide a framework for improving an organization's business result by assessing the organization's strengths and weaknesses and by enabling comparisons with similar organizations [12].

**Table 1. Organizational maturity levels and their description**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Mean range</b>	<b>Level name</b>	<b>Level description</b>
0	0.0-0.9	Incomplete	There is a general failure to attain the purpose of the process. There are no easily identifiable work products or outputs of the process.
1	1.0-1.5	Performed	The purpose of the process is generally achieved. The achievement may not be rigorously planned and tracked. Individuals within the organization recognize that an action should be performed, and there is general agreement that this action is performed as and when required. There are identifiable work products for the process, and these testify to the achievement of the purpose.
2	1.6-2.5	Managed	The process delivers work products of acceptable quality within defined time scales. Performance according to specified procedures is planned and tracked. Work products conform to specified standards and requirements.
3	2.6-3.5	Established	The process is performed and managed using a defined process based upon good principles. Individual implementations of the process use approved, tailored versions of standard and documented processes. The resources necessary to establish the process definition are also in place.
4	3.6-4.5	Predictable	The defined process is performed consistently in practice, within defined control limits, to achieve its goals. Detailed measures of performance are collected and analyzed. This practice leads to a quantitative understanding of process capability and an improved ability to predict performance. The quality of work products is quantitatively known.
5	4.5-5.0	Optimizing	Performance of the process is optimized to meet current and future business needs, and the process achieves repeatability in meeting its defined business goals. Quantitative process effectiveness and efficiency goals (targets) for performance are established, based on the business goals of the organization. Obtaining quantitative feedback enables continuous process monitoring against these goals, and improvement is achieved by analysis of the results. Optimizing a process involves piloting innovative ideas and technologies and changing non-effective processes to meet defined goals and objectives.

In the IS/IT discipline, maturity is regarded as “a measure to evaluate the capabilities of an organization. The maturity models provide a framework to help enable organizations increase their capability to deliver projects on schedule, within budget and according to the desired technical specifications [13]. Measuring maturity in organizations is regarded as a subjective task, since most significant research is primarily focusing on what people are doing operationally [14]. Skulmoski recommends a view that where competence and maturity should be linked together for project success and not focusing only on action and where competence should be regarded as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that supports performance.

The Department of Labor and Employment Davao region adopts an organizational maturity assessment rating matrix which aim to determine the level of maturity of an organization based on the indicators set forth in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework [15]. These indicators are organizational management, financial management, registrations and certifications, linkages and networking and human resources management. Organizational maturity levels are scheduled and interpreted in Table 1.

These assessment procedures help an organization understand where it has come from, where it is now, and what processes need to be implemented, in order to continue the implementation of management methodologies. As organizations mature in business and project management processes, and their use of information technology, they implement centralized solutions to facilitate these processes.

The synthesis of the literature review led to the assumption that organizational maturity is strongly correlated to project management success.

## 1.2 Conceptual Framework

This study intends to explore PARBUF-MPC’s organizational maturity and its implications to the implementation of the DILEEP projects in terms of the indicators project management, financial management, organizational management, technical assistance and beneficiaries’ well-being. The independent variable is the organizational maturity of PARBUF-MPC as perceived by the member beneficiaries and measured quantitatively. The dependent variable is the description of project implementation which was assessed through various close and open-ended survey items. The dynamics between organizational maturity and the project implementation was comprehensively described in the study.

## 1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to explore PARBUF-MPC’s organizational maturity and its implications to the implementation of the DILEEP projects. Specifically, the study intends to answer questions on (1) the level of organizational maturity of PARBUF-MPC as perceived by the member beneficiaries; (2) the DILEEP livelihood programs of PARBUF-MPC be evaluated in terms of project management, financial management, organizational management, technical assistance, and beneficiaries’ well-being; (3) the gaps in the implementation of the projects.

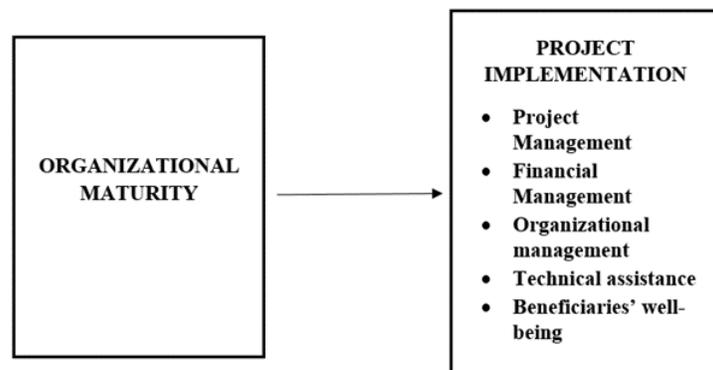


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of the study

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study shall contribute to Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Local government units (LGU), PARBUF-MPC cooperative, practitioners and researchers. DOLE will be provided with detailed evaluation of the funded projects. In order to identify whether gains in inclusive growth have been achieved, the findings will determine possible courses of action as the continuation and modification of the project concept, management and implementation. This study can contribute ideas to policy analysis and decision making of the department. LGU of the province of Davao del Sur and Davao Occidental will be provided with valuable information as to the significant improvement on the quality of life of their constituents. Whether there exists increased social protection of the beneficiaries of the project is vital in the construction of further social development projects in the two provinces. They may also be assisted in the identification of other possible viable livelihood projects. The PARBUF-MPC cooperative will benefit from the assessment to be done because the result will provide valuable feedback in order to improve their operations and mechanisms. Development practitioners may benefit from the learnings and experiences of the project implementation in the context of PARBUF-MPC. These learnings will strengthen their competence in future project engagements. Development researchers will be able to gain valuable knowledge by synthesizing the findings of this research into the current discourses on project management and implementation.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study adopted the mixed methods research design. This approach is most ideal for evaluating programs and projects which involve people organizations at various contexts. Mixed methods evaluations seek to integrate social science disciplines with predominantly quantitative and predominantly qualitative approaches to theory, data collection, data analysis and interpretation [16]. The purpose is to strengthen the reliability of data, validity of the findings and recommendations, and to broaden and deepen our understanding of the processes through which program outcomes and impacts are achieved, and how these are affected by the context within which the program is implemented.

While mixed methods are now widely used in program evaluation, and evaluation frequently require their use, many evaluators do not utilize the full potential of the mixed methods approach.

Among the various mixed methods designs, this study adopted the convergent parallel mixed methods approach. The convergent mixed methods approach is the most familiar of the basic and advanced mixed methods strategies. Researchers new to mixed methods typically first think of this approach because they feel that mixed methods only consist of combining the quantitative and qualitative data. In this approach, a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzes them separately, and then compares the results to see if the findings confirm or disconfirm each other. The key assumption of this approach is that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information—often detailed views of participants qualitatively and scores on instruments quantitatively—and together they yield results that should be the same [17].

### **2.2 Research Setting**

This study was conducted in Pasig, Kiblawan, Davao del Sur. Geographically, Pasig is a barangay, which is a smaller unit of governance within the municipality of Kiblawan in the province of Davao del Sur. This is the location of the cooperative PARBUF-MPC where the DILEEP projects have been implemented and where most of the members of the cooperative reside. At present, there are around 180 PARBUF-MPC members involved in the livelihood programs like banana chips making, rubber clonal nursery and hog raising. Most of them are farmers. Using Slovin's formula, the estimated sample is 124. These were selected using simple random sampling. However, during the actual conduct of data gathering, only 119 beneficiaries were successfully surveyed because some members were already inactive.

### **2.3 Data Gathering**

Because this study adopted the mixed methods approach, there were two research instruments employed. This first tool aims to determine the level of maturity of the organization. In rating each indicator item, the highest score is 5 and the lowest is 0. The assessment determined the level per category based on the responses of the members and further substantiated by the

documents submitted or presented by the organization.

The second questionnaire is for the assessment of the implementation of the project to and was responded by the beneficiary members of PARBUF-MPC who are recipient of the DILEEP projects. This is made up of items for project implementation, financial management, organizational management, technical assistance and the interview questions to explore the beneficiaries' profile and the benefits brought to them by the various projects. The questions for beneficiaries' well-being were translated to vernacular.

The steps performed to gather data starts with an appropriate letter of permission were secured from the DOLE provincial offices to conduct the study. This stage is very important because other gatekeepers will require the approval of the conduct of the study in allowing the researcher to perform interviews and focus group discussions among the beneficiaries. The cooperative president was also notified by the DOLE Davao del Sur field office. Secondly, the instruments to be used in the data gathering of study were then subjected to validity testing by a pool of experts in the field of public administration and project evaluation. These instruments may only be used after incorporating the comments and suggestions of the validators. Then, data mining in the form of documentary analysis was done to collect valid and reliable information about the details of the project. These data shall be collected from the available sources such as monitoring and progress reports, results of results-based assessment, department orders, liquidation and disbursement reports, and budget allocations. Other secondary sources will also be accessed such as published reports, censuses, surveys, and comparative international data, project documents that can be mined include periodic project reports (monthly, biannual, annual), baseline data, needs assessments, grant data bases, internal and external evaluations, technical advisor reports, field reports, and project logs and diaries kept by project personnel or beneficiaries. Followed by, the researcher then personally administered the instruments to the beneficiaries, particularly on the quantitative part which was organizational maturity. Lastly, interviews on the beneficiaries' well-being were then performed to gather the qualitative data of the study. Prior to the conduct of the interviews, the proponent secured a consent form following the proper guidelines,

procedures and ethical considerations. Tape recording of the interviews record the sessions provided that proper protocols were followed and the participants' consent were gathered prior to the session. The proponent transcribed the notes that shall represent the literal copy of what has been said and recorded onto paper.

## **2.4 Statistical Treatment**

The quantitative data on organizational maturity was described using descriptive statistics. Particularly, appropriate measures of central tendency, spread or variation and normality were used. Frequency and relative frequency were also used to describe the close-ended item type of response on the project implementation. A crucial analysis of the study is the evaluation of the project through the beneficiaries' well-being. To process the interview responses, thematic analysis was employed to recognize the constructs of the improvement of beneficiaries' well-being. The proponent then integrated the quantitative and qualitative research results to yield a us a broader understanding of the research subject. Mixed methods research allows to triangulate findings, which can strengthen validity and increase the utility of our work.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This part presents the analysis and interpretation of the data of the study. Using the analytical tools identified in the methodology, the following results and findings are presented and organized based on the objectives of the study.

### **3.1 Level of Organizational Maturity of PARBUF-MPC**

The overall maturity level of PARBUF-MPC was found to have a mean of 3.62, which is verbally described as predictable. Based on the Organizational Readiness framework, this is level 4 of 0-5 levels. This means that the defined process is performed consistently in practice, within defined control limits, to achieve its goals. Detailed measures of performance are collected and analyzed. This practice leads to a quantitative understanding of process capability and an improved ability to predict performance. The quality of work products is quantitatively known.

Considering the 35 indicator items of the organizational maturity instrument, it was found

that various levels were demonstrated by these items. Generally, there were three levels manifested namely level 2, 3 and 4 which were respectively described as managed, established and predictable. These results are found in Table 2.

**Table 2. Level of organizational maturity of PARBUF-MPC**

<b>Indicator items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Verbal description</b>
1. Formulation of the vision, mission and goals	2.29	1.181	Managed
2. Internalization of vision, mission and goals by officers	2.51	1.032	Managed
3. Internalization of vision, mission and goals by members	2.58	1.060	Established
4. Formulation of constitution and by-laws	2.60	1.180	Established
5. Regular review of constitution and by-laws	2.23	1.183	Managed
6. Internalization of constitution and by-laws by officers	2.55	.971	Established
7. Internalization of constitution and by-laws by members	2.64	1.070	Established
8. Conduct of regular meetings for members	2.50	1.206	Managed
9. Conduct of regular meetings of officers	2.36	1.118	Managed
10. Proper recording of minutes of meetings	2.52	1.023	Managed
11. Clear organizational structure, systems and procedures	2.62	1.171	Established
12. Established conflict management committee	2.47	1.148	Managed
13. Formulation of annual workplan or financial yearly development plan	4.42	.754	Predictable
14. Regular conduct of election	4.21	.845	Predictable
15. Gender responsive policies	3.76	.971	Predictable
16. Climate change adaptation policies	3.50	1.064	Established
17. Legal personality	4.44	.788	Predictable
18. Project monitoring	4.14	.739	Predictable
19. Bookkeeping practices	4.26	.788	Predictable
20. Internal audit	4.05	.914	Predictable
21. External audit	4.21	.946	Predictable
22. Financial plan	4.39	.815	Predictable
23. Increase in income of business	4.33	.826	Predictable
24. Capital investment	4.17	.819	Predictable
25. Partnership agreement for project	4.38	.803	Predictable
26. Marketing agreement for business ventures	4.25	.772	Predictable
27. Business certificate	4.31	.822	Predictable
28. Good Management Practices (GMP) certification	4.32	.803	Predictable
29. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) - COC	4.18	.920	Predictable
30. General Labor Standard (GLS) –COC	4.25	.845	Predictable
31. Compensation	4.44	.744	Predictable
32. Training of officers	4.23	.788	Predictable
33. Training of staff	4.23	.777	Predictable
34. Training of members	4.30	.707	Predictable
35. Annual training program	4.25	0.794	Predictable
Overall	3.62	0.925	Predictable

Level 2 or managed level of organizational maturity means that the process delivers work products of acceptable quality within defined time scales. Performance according to specified procedures is planned and tracked. Work products conform to specified standards and requirements. Among the indicators of organizational maturity of PARBUF-MPC that were found to be of level 2 are proper recording of minutes of meetings (2.52), internalization of the vision, mission and goals by officers (2.51), conduct of regular meetings for members (2.5), establishment of conflict management committee (2.47), conduct of regular meetings by officers (2.36), the formulation of vision, mission and goals (2.29) and regular review of constitution and by-laws (2.23).

Level 3 or established level of organizational maturity means that the process is performed and managed using a defined process based upon good principles. Individual implementations of the process use approved, tailored versions of standard and documented processes. The resources necessary to establish the process definition are also in place. Among the indicators of organizational maturity of PARBUF-MPC that were found to be of level 3 are climate change adaptation strategies (3.5), internalization of constitution and by-laws by members (2.64), clear organizational structure, systems and procedures (2.62), formulation of constitution and by-laws (2.6), internalization of VMG by members (2.58) internalization of constitution and by-laws by officers (2.55).

Level 4 organizational maturity is verbally described as predictable. This means that the defined process is performed consistently in practice, within defined control limits, to achieve its goals. Detailed measures of performance are collected and analyzed. This practice leads to a quantitative understanding of process capability and an improved ability to predict performance. The quality of work products is quantitatively known. Majority (63%) of the indicator items of organizational maturity for PARBUF-MPC were found to be in the predictable level. In descending order of means, these are compensation (4.44), legal personality (4.44), formulation of annual work plan of Financial yearly development plan (4.42), financial plan (4.39), partnership agreement for project (4.38), increase in income of business (4.33), Good Management Practices certification (4.32), business certificate (4.31), bookkeeping practices (4.26), marketing agreement for

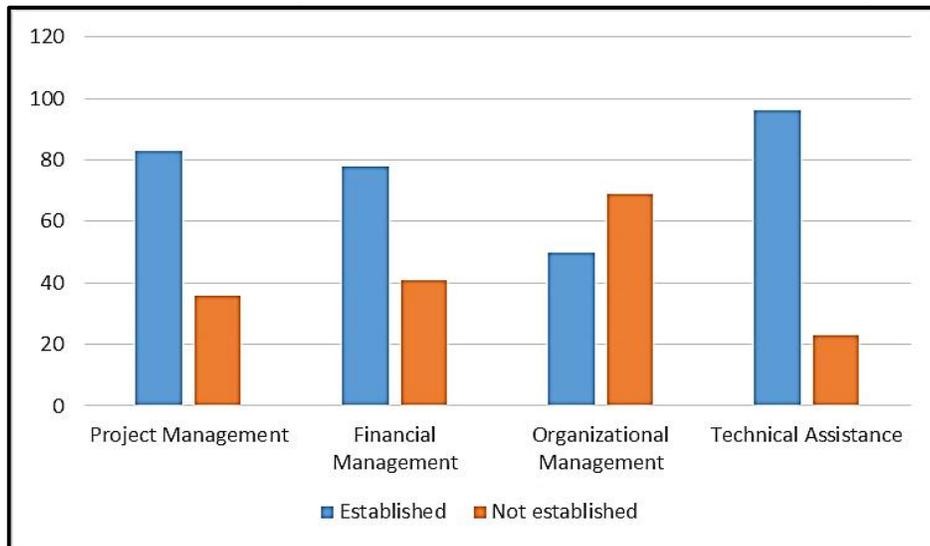
business ventures (4.25), General labor standard certification (4.25), annual training program (4.25), training of officers (4.23), training of staff and members (4.23), regular conduct of election (4.21), external audit (4.21), occupational safety and health certification (4.18), capital investment (4.17), project monitoring (4.14), internal audit (4.05) and gender responsive policies (3.76).

### **3.2 Evaluation of Project Implementation**

Implementation of the DILEEP projects of PARBUF-MPC involved the execution of the project plan and design, the utilization of agreed resources to carry out the planned activities and achieve the objectives. The evaluation of the implementation of the DILEEP projects of PARBUF-MPC had a range of perspectives namely project management, financial management, organizational management and technical assistance. The summary of participants' responses as to their evaluation of these dimensions is found in Fig. 2.

#### **3.2.1 Project management**

The general response of the participants as to project management was established (69.74%). As to structure, PARBUF-MPC was registered to the Cooperative Development Authority under Republic Act 9520 with registration number 312212019. As to policy, the organization has acquired certifications like the business certificate, good management practices, occupational safety and health. These are required by law and are also manifested in practice as labor workers use proper gear in the production process. As a business organization, compliance to these certifications are compulsory for operation. As to structure, there is an organizational structure with president and other personnel like quality controller, marketing officer and purchaser. Under these personnel are the member beneficiaries whom some are labor workers in the operation of the projects like banana chips making, hog raising and rubber propagation. Sustainability mechanisms of PARBUF-MPC on the continuous operations of the projects are considered established. This is evidenced by the acquisition of authority to operate in 2017 as issued by the Food and Drug Authority, which enabled the cooperative to join in trade fairs to showcase their products. In 2016, the projects have been fully implemented already and the funds have been utilized. The banana chips making also yielded an NFA retail store which operates until the present.



**Fig. 2. Evaluation of project implementation by participants**

The implementers were also able to market in the school canteens and nearby barangays and also expanded to other municipalities. Lately, a tie-up was also forged by the cooperative with the Pasalubong center of General Santos City.

### 3.2.2 Financial management

The various DILEP projects of PARBUF-MPC were released of their funding in various years. Particularly, in 2008, the rubber cultivation project was granted ₱14,000. In 2009, the banana chips making was granted ₱ 53,000 and with administrative equipment, utensils and tools for production like couldrons for frying banana were provided by DOLE Regional Office. In 2014, ₱304,000 was granted to the member beneficiaries of PARBUF\_MPC for its hog-raising project wherein the breeders and feeders were also provided by DOLE region XI through accredited co-partners. The general response of the participants as to financial management was established (65.5%). The formulation of the annual financial yearly development plan has been complied. This was due to the fact the Commission on Audit requires this document for the issuance of the certificate of good housekeeping. Other documents for legal compliance are also ensured by hiring bookkeeper to keep track of BIR documents. Financial records were well documented as financial status are reported during monthly meetings. It was remarked however that members suggested the use of bulletin boards

for posting also. Although the general response of the members to financial management was established, there have been irregularities found in the conduct of audits. It was noted that the assigned internal auditor was not functioning due to lack to technical knowledge. In effect, the cooperative hires an external auditor and the audit is not done regularly but based on the availability of the external auditor. Transparency mechanisms are said to be in place as there is regular reporting of financial status during regular meetings.

### 3.2.3 Organizational management

The general response of the participants as to organizational management was not established (51.9%). Several remarks were pointed by the members of PARBUF-MPC. It was found that although there was an organizational structure, some of the officials are not functioning. It is thus the burden of the cooperative president to handle most of the tasks. There is also a deficiency of the qualified officials to be elected or assigned. As a result the president is always multi-tasking and cannot attend to all areas because she has no replacement. This had serious implications in the delineation of authority and functions. The members also expressed their lack of confidence to carry out tasks and do not entrust the operation to other persons that may be elected. Thus, in elections, the small set of officers is always re-elected. On the other hand, the review of the constitution and by-laws of the organization have been regularly done and

attended by members through the annual general assembly.

### **3.2.4 Technical assistance**

The general response of the participants as to technical assistance was established (80.6%). Technical assistance for the members of the cooperative was determined by the provision of trainings by linkage to government agencies, private institutions and other stakeholders. Majority of the training needs of the project implementers were provided by DOLE. Other government agencies partnered were Department of Agrarian Reform and Department of Trade and Industry. Among the technical assistance provided to PARBUF-MPC members were Diagnosis training, simple bookkeeping, costing, financial management, banana chip processing, OSH, good manufacturing practices, training of trainers, Sustainability management, priority organization under sustainable livelihood framework, business and work improvement course. Recently, up-valuing training was conducted and manuals were provided. The manuals contain the description of the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Organizations (ARBOs) that ensure the quality of raw materials. The manuals also provide guidelines to ensure that ingredients used in the production are within quality standards set by the employer.

### **3.3 Gaps in the Project Implementation**

The results of the analysis of the dynamics between organizational maturity and evaluation of project implementation revealed the gaps that must be addressed. These gaps refer to unwanted circumstances that happened during project implementation and their reasons. These also include things or actions that should have been done but were not done and what should have not been done. The gaps are classified and discussed thoroughly for deep understanding.

The technical aspect refers to the attention paid to technical problems. First gap was on the workplace or plant layout for production activities. In the banana chips project, there were no clear boundaries. There was also a deficiency in quality assurance particularly in the parameters for uniformity of the quality of the finished product. The product also has no label nor brand name. Two units of a particular slicer the design of which was found in the training provided by Philippine Women's College was also desired by the women in banana chips making. For hog

raising, the cooperative was not able to provide quality piglets due to lack of technical know-how on hog-raising. For rubber cultivation, there were problems with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources because of lack of consultation with them. The planting of this commodity was bounded by guidelines set by DENR. There was irregularity in the harvesting or collection of rubber sap because the tapper needed more technical training.

The financial aspect refers to the ability of the organization to efficiently use the local funds and its sufficiency. Some implementers clamored of the lack of funds for rolling out capital. Given the amount released by DOLE, the cooperative still needed to sustain the business enterprise and had a bigger counterpart in the capitalization. Transparency mechanism in terms of bulletin boards for posting financial reports and status was lacking. It was also identified that the financial yearly development plan was compiled because it was required but as to achievement or assessment of the quality of outputs, there is uncertainty.

The economic aspect refers to whether the project benefited the beneficiaries. The annual financial development plan has been formulated but as to its achievement or assessment of performance is questionable. Furthermore, the increased income of ₱6000 is still low considering that the poverty threshold of the locality is benchmarked at ₱10000 to ₱12000.

The social and gender aspect refer to the effect of the project on the different groups and individuals, and households within the community, its impact on men and women alike and their participation. For the DILEEP projects implemented, workshops and trainings were provided, however, there was no measurement of effect. The lack of personnel to hold and perform the various positions implies that these skill sets and competencies were the ones really needed.

The risk identification and management was also identified as a gap in the project implementation. Undue risk from natural and man-made calamities and even financial and operational risks should be factored in all stages of the project cycle. Potential risks that may come along during the course of project implementation were not anticipated. One risk identified was security specifically theft which happened in the piggery. Some of the hogs were stolen and butchered.

## **4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.1 Summary**

This study banks on the maturity model which reflects a framework that defines maturity as an aggregate of incremental capabilities prerequisite to effective organizational project management.

This study intends to explore Pasig Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries and Upland Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PARBUF-MPC) organizational maturity and its implications to the implementation of the DILEEP projects in terms of the dimensions project management, financial management, organizational management, technical assistance and beneficiaries' well-being. Using the convergent mixed methods research design, organizational maturity was measured using the Department of Labor and Employment's 35-item organizational maturity instrument, while project implementation was described using frequency and themes from beneficiaries' responses to open ended questions. Data were gathered from 119 member beneficiaries of PARBUF-MPC in Pasig, Kiblawan, Davao del Sur.

Results indicate the cooperative's level of organizational maturity obtained an overall mean of 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.925. This level of organizational maturity is verbally described as predictable, which means that the organization's defined processes are performed consistently in practice, with defined control limits to achieve its goals. Majority of the indicator items which can generally be described as part of the cooperative's business operations were also found to be in level 4 or predictable level. However, there are some indicator items that were found to be in level 3 and level 2, verbally described as established and managed respectively.

Project implementation on the other hand was identified by the respondents to be established under project management, financial management and technical assistance while organizational management was described as not established. Qualitative remarks of the responses also revealed particular themes under each dimension of project implementation. Beneficiaries' well-being as the fifth dimension of project implementation revealed themes like women empowerment and improvement in the quality of lives. Essentially, the gaps in the

implementation in the projects like banana chips making, hog raising and rubber cultivation were identified. These gaps were classified as technical, financial, economic, social and risk management.

### **4.2 Conclusion**

Based on the interpretation of the analysis performed on the data gathered to answer the objectives of the study, the following conclusions were arrived.

First, the PARBUF-MPC's organizational maturity was found to be of level 4, with an overall mean of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.925. This level is verbally described as predictable, which means that the organization's processes are performed consistently in practice, within defined control limits, to achieve its goals. Detailed measures of performance are collected and analyzed. This practice leads to a quantitative understanding of process capability and an improved ability to predict performance. The quality of work products is quantitatively known. Specifically, it was found that out of the 35 indicator items, 22 were found to be of level 4, 6 were found to be at level 3 and 7 were level 2. Level 3 is verbally described as established level of organizational maturity which means that processes are performed and managed using a defined process based upon good principles. Individual implementations of the process use approved, tailored versions of standard and documented processes. The resources necessary to establish the process definition are also in place. Level 2 is verbally described as managed level of organizational maturity means that the process delivers work products of acceptable quality within defined time scales. Performance according to specified procedures is planned and tracked. Work products conform to specified standards and requirements.

Secondly, the project implementation was generally found to be established in the dimensions project management (69.7%), financial management (65.5%), and technical assistance (80.6%) while organizational management (41.1%) was found to be not established by the respondents. The qualitative remarks of the member beneficiaries of the cooperative revealed specific justifications on the general description of being established and not established. A fifth dimension was added to project implementation which is beneficiaries' well-being. Analysis of the qualitative responses

revealed two major themes. First are women empowerment as female beneficiaries involved in the project expressed a deep sense of capacity to contribute to the economic needs of their own families and the community as a whole. Improvement in the quality of life was also identified as a theme which can be described as mostly economic benefits.

Lastly, the synthesis of the various responses was used to identify the gaps of project implementation. The gaps found were categorized into five namely; technical, financial, economic, social and risk management.

### 4.3 Recommendation

Distilling lessons from all aspects of the project serve as organizational learning to improve project implementation and the succeeding projects. The findings of this study lead to the decision that it should be continued; however, the conclusions should be taken into account when planning its continued phase. Specifically, the following recommendations are highly suggested. First, mainstreaming risk and opportunities management in the organization. Risks are numerous in the context of project implementation. For PARBUF-MPC, mechanisms like regular identification of financial, security and disaster risks should be developed to anticipate the onset of potential unexpected events that may hamper operations. Opportunities management on the other hand is the systematic exploration and evaluation of possible opportunities that could potentially increase the flow of benefits to the organization. Also, more stringent sustainability mechanisms to ensure sustainability beyond project life. This refers to exploring market opportunities as well as constraints. In addition, since it was found that there have been numerous technical trainings conducted already to the members, it is suggested to conduct also trainings on management and governance especially to the potential members who can become officials to man operations of the project. Lastly, further researches are recommended to assess the impact of the projects to the lives of the beneficiaries using the counterfactual method, to assess the impact of the trainings conducted to the beneficiaries and to assess other training needs that might have not yet been ascertained. Gender studies are also encouraged to describe the roles of men and women in the implementation of the projects.

### CONSENT

All authors declare that written informed consent was obtained from the participants (or other approved parties) for publication of this paper.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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