



Good Metropolitan Governance through Inter-Local Alliances:

The Case of Metropolitan Iloilo-Guimaras Economic

Development Council (MIGEDC)

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Abstract

In the light of the globalizing world, urbanization is almost everywhere and this world of ours is drastically evolving to an urban world. The Philippines is experiencing the same statistical trend, as more than half of the Filipino population resides in urban areas, and the country's rate of urban growth since 1980s is considered as one of the highest in the developing economies of Asia (Mercado and Manasan, 2002, p. 35). Overpopulation and overcrowding, traffic congestion, solid waste and refuse disposal, water and sewerage systems, public safety and security, and environmental degradation are just few of the many problems that are directly related to rapid urbanization. Of the many problems posed by metropolitan areas, one of the most intractable is that of how they can be governed effectively (Barlow, 1991). Given that the challenges posed by urbanization cannot be underestimated, governments both at the national and local levels are finding efficient and effective ways to manage and govern urban / metropolitan areas. One of these is the formation of metropolitan alliances between neighboring local government units (LGUs) to address common issues and concerns brought about by rapid urban growth. Yet, scholars in public administration and governance agree that the main challenge in metropolitan alliances is not on the formation/creation of alliances but rather in sustaining and maintaining them.

This study provides an analysis and evaluation of a metropolitan alliance – the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Economic Development Council (MIGEDC). Taking into context that formation of metropolitan alliance is emerging as an approach to develop the capacities of local

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governments to meet the demands and challenges of urbanization, this study will first review and analyze the trigger issues and forces that led to the creation of the alliance, as well as the binding and unbinding factors that influence the alliance's governance process. The focal point of the study is the practice of good metropolitan governance wherein it seeks to answer the following questions: (1) is MIGEDC institutionally stable and financially sustainable?; (2) does MIGEDC adhere to and practice the principles and norms of good governance? and; (3) in the performance of the alliance's functions and mandates, were the objectives and goals achieved? These three (3) major research questions will eventually determine if good metropolitan governance was achieved and practiced in MIGEDC's pursuit of providing an improved quality of urban life to its constituents. It must be noted that the major research questions are complementary and mutually reinforcing of each other, thus serving as indicators of good metropolitan governance in the context of this study.

David Easton's systems framework was adopted to construct the systems framework on metropolitan governance used as the conceptual framework of this study. Based on the findings and evaluation of the elements of institutional stability that includes leadership, membership, structure and purpose, and plans and operations, it has been found out that MIGEDC is institutionally stable. In terms of MIGEDC's financial sustainability as a metropolitan alliance, it was found out that the alliance is relatively sustainable in terms of finances. This relativity is justified on the point that the financial aspects of MIGEDC prove to be sustainable at this point, yet it needs immediate attention and serious reconsideration for it to be financially sustainable in the long-term perspective. Overall findings for practice and adherence to principle and norms of good governance reveal that MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance adheres to and promotes good governance, thus promoting a culture of equity, effectiveness and efficiency, participation, and accountability and transparency. As a work-in-progress and developing metropolitan alliance, MIGEDC continually achieves its goals and objectives in the performance of its mandated functions through its agreed areas of collaboration, general goals and objectives, and the four (4) Es of metropolitan governance.

**Keywords: Good Metropolitan Governance / Inter-Local Alliances / Metropolitan Alliances
/ MIGEDC/ Land Use**



Introduction

The organization and formation of alliances between and among local government units (LGUs) is considered as one of the most effective strategies for local economic development (Panadero, 2010). Beginning in the early 1990s, local government units, particularly municipalities and cities, began moving towards cooperative undertakings to achieve certain goals and address problems which are common among them. The underlying reason in forging these alliances is evident; local government units acknowledge that single-handedly, they cannot adequately address problems and concerns given their scarce/ insufficient resources and limited capacities. With most LGUs being heavily dependent on the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) share from the national government, coupled with the looming financial crisis that affects the economy and the constant increase in the cost of delivering basic services, the challenges just continue to pile-up for local governments. This situation is by no means unique to the Philippines as local governments worldwide are also struggling to deliver services in increasingly difficult conditions, trying to solve the contradictory equation of delivering more, with less (MacDonald, 2010).

London, the first world city provides a classic example. As early as 1889, the London County Council (LCC) was established to operate all municipal services in the area of around three (3) million people. Rendered irrelevant and overtaken by suburban expansion, the LCC was swept away in Britain's first metropolitan reform of 1965, and was replaced by the Greater London Council (GLC). The GLC was short-lived as it was abolished in 1986, just 21 years after it was created. The abolition resulted to the dispersal of authority downward to the boroughs and upward to the central government. Yet, this was not a lasting arrangement as the new government for London – the Greater London Authority (GLA) came into effect in July 2000. With an elected Mayor and Assembly, the new GLA absorbed most of the former London-wide organizations and have over-all responsibility for strategic planning, transport, economic development and regeneration, police, and civil defense (Rao, 2007, p. 8-9).

Toronto, Canada in the North American Region presents the same trend. Toronto has a long history of metropolitan governance reforms by adapting its institutional and financial structures and modernizing its administration in order to deal with rapid economic, social and



environmental change. Metropolitan Toronto was created by provincial legislation on January 1, 1954. It was a two-tier government structure with a metropolitan tier that encompassed thirteen (13) lower-tier municipalities, which by 1967 was reduced to six (6) through amalgamation (Slack, 2004 p. 16). Until 1988, Metro Toronto was an indirectly elected body, but in that year with the passing of Bill 29, a council composed of directly elected representatives was created (Rao, 2007, p. 10). Direct election of representatives to the council paved the way for greater accountability, but another reform was introduced 10 years later. On January 1, 1998, the new City of Toronto came into being by replacing the former metropolitan level of government and its constituent lower-tier municipalities with a single-tier city. This restructuring was not initiated by local initiative but by the provincial government through the passage of Bill 103 or the *City of Toronto Act, 1996* (Slack, 2004, p. 17).

Closer to home examples are embodied by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG), Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), and the JABOTABEK Region in Indonesia. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is overseen by an elected governor who provides an executive arm of the Tokyo metropolis and is in effect the mayor of the central area. The Governor takes over-all control of metropolitan affairs and maintains the collective integrity of the administration. He has the exclusive right to prepare the budget, implement expenditure decisions, submit draft decrees to the Assembly, and levy taxes. Though the powers and functions of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly and Governor are formally separate, they collaborate as equals and are regarded as interdependent (Rao, 2007, p. 9 & 60). Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) follows a similar set-up, with the Governor exercising executive powers and the Bangkok Metropolitan Council (BMC) exercising legislative functions. The BMA is tasked to formulate and implement policies on transport services, urban planning, waste management, housing, roads and highways, security services and environmental management. JABOTABEK metropolitan region on the other hand, is composed of the capital city of DKI Jakarta and the regencies of Bogor, Tangerang, and Bekasi where a joint development cooperation board was established in 1976 with the responsibility of coordinating development activities in this region. Under the Indonesian structure of local government, both the regency and the city are the same administration level, having their own local government and legislative body. The difference



between a Regency and a City lies in demography, size and economy as generally, a regency comprises a rural, larger area than a city. Cooperation among the local governments is carried out through the establishment of the JABOTABEK Planning and Development Cooperation Board headed by the governor of DKI Jakarta and the governor of West Java (Bintarto, 1998).

In the Philippines, metropolitan governance and the existence of metropolitan government have a long history. In the case of Metro Manila alone, the political and administrative changes underwent three (3) legal revisions: Presidential Decree 824, Executive Order 392, and Republic Act 7924. These revisions involved recurring themes of institutional form and mandate, functions and services, financing, governing body and chairmanship, and personnel / staffing (Panganiban, 1995). The formation of alliances among LGUs is not anymore new in the case of the Philippines. The 1987 Constitution under Article X Section 13 stipulates that *“local government units may group themselves, consolidate or coordinate their efforts, services and resources for purposes commonly beneficial to them in accordance with law”*. This stipulation is likewise reiterated in Section 33 of the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC). Upon passage of the Code, many local governments have entered into cooperative undertakings either to pool resources and capabilities in delivering services, or address common issues, challenges and problems that go beyond administrative and political boundaries (Brillantes and Tumanut, 2007, p. 26). Configurations of these interlocal alliances range from the most common coastal-resource management alliance, to alliances for economic development, environmental protection/conservation, and alliance for integrated delivery of social services (e.g. health). These alliances are seen as instruments for local governments to increase their ability to carry out their mandates under decentralization (Phil. Development Forum [PDF], Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit [GTZ], European Union [EU], Canadian International Development Agency [CIDA], 2010).

These alliances vary according to type and membership. When grouped by type, alliances could be a geopolitical alliance, an ecosystem based, or a thematic alliance (GTZ, 2009). If grouped by membership, generally there are three (3) types of local alliances:

- (1) Natural alliances among local governments which is the most common;



(2) Public-private alliance, where local governments develop active partnerships with NGOs, POs and the private sector; and

(3) Quasi public alliance made up of political subdivisions such as municipalities, cities or provinces that are vested with juridical personalities through legislation.

One prominent example of a natural alliance among local government units (LGUs) is a metropolitan alliance. Typically, a “metropolitan alliance consists of a core city and the local government units (LGUs) contiguous with it” (Mercado and Manasan, 2002, p. 163). Types of metropolitan alliances vary across the country. These range from the establishment of a formal, upper-tier governance structure within a metropolitan area (e.g., Metro Manila Development Authority), to the establishment of less-formal, consensus-based metropolitan development councils (e.g., Metro Naga, Metro Cebu and Metro Iloilo) and finally to the establishment of a sub-regional development board encompassing both urban and peri-urban regions (e.g., Metro Davao) (Treñas, 2003).

But it must be noted that not all LGUs are open to the idea of forging alliances and entering into metropolitan arrangements. Some are hesitant in joining inter-local alliances and other metropolitan initiatives because they see metropolitanization as an encroachment to their independence and autonomy as local governments. Some even see it as a move for recentralization, some fear loss of power and authority as well as identity. Metropolitan alliances may make LGUs give up some of the greater and broader powers and functions they have been accorded under the 1991 LGC. Smaller LGUs might consider such initiative as a form of annexation and fear that they will lose their identity as a distinct local entity (Mercado and Manasan, 2002, p.37). But advocates of metropolitan alliances argue that benefits of joining an alliance offset the loss of power. The benefits include: better delivery of services, more efficient implementation of projects and activities, improved participation of more stakeholders, access to more information and better technology, and increased claim-making power for funds and services vis-à-vis funding agencies, etc. (PDF et al., 2010, p. 49-50).

Moreover, scholars in public administration and governance agree that the main challenge in metropolitan alliances is not on the formation/creation of alliances but rather in sustaining and maintaining them. As cited from the experience of the League of Provinces, they



say that **“it is easy to form alliances but it is difficult to sustain them”** (Delegation of the European Union [EU] to the Philippines and the Philippine Development Forum [PDF] Sub-Working Group on Inter-local Cooperation, 2010, p. 53). Many inter-LGU alliances formed earlier have slowed down, discontinued operation, or have become paper alliances (Ferrer, 2008). Several arrangements failed to take off due to the inability to sustain political support and financial support or mechanism for revenue generation (Brillantes and Tumanut, 2007, p.29). In a study on alliances done by Brillantes and Tumanut (2007), it was documented that differing political interests and priorities aggravated by change in leadership with the member-LGUs resulted to the disintegration of the Marihatag, Cagwait, San Agustin, Lianga, Tago, Bayabas and San Miguel (MACASALTABAYAMI) alliance, while dysfunctional organization and management led to the dormancy and disintegration of Metro BLIST. The collapse of the Batan Bay Integrated Management Council in Aklan province and Central Panay Economic Union (CPEU) showed that lack of financial resources or mechanisms to generate income as a major barrier to sustainability (Brillantes and Tumanut, 2007, p.29).

Institutional stability and financial sustainability of the alliance are integral for its survival and continued operation. The financial aspects of the alliance serve as its lifeblood therefore; the alliance must ensure that it has resources and funds to cover the cost of its operations. An alliance is financially stable when it has funds sufficient to cover the cost of its operation (PDF et al., 2010, p. 71). Funds are valuable but **not** a sufficient condition for the sustainability of the alliance. Funds must be complemented by right and working organizational structure and procedures, effective processes of negotiation and communication, right skills, strong link with all stakeholders, and most especially the exercise of political will (Ferrer, 2008). Also, there has to be commitment from the local chief executives (LCEs) because without it, the alliance would not prosper. Support for alliance-building and management, particularly in improving human resource management and building competencies of the people working in the alliance (EU and PDF, 2010, p. 48-49), is also important for the alliance’s stability and sustainability.

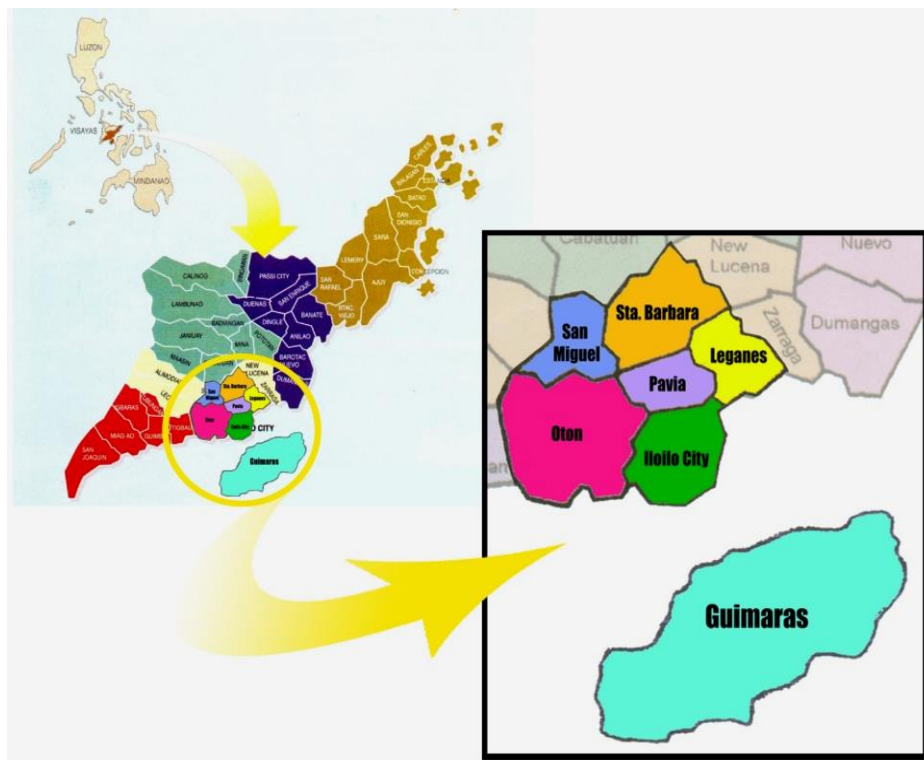
Such kind of metropolitan alliance exists between Iloilo City and its neighboring Local Government Units (LGUs). Being one of the highly-urbanized areas in the country, cooperation



and coordination of LGUs within the Metropolitan Iloilo – Guimaras (MIG) area is carried through the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Economic Development Council (MIGEDC). MIG is located in the Western Visayas region. It is composed of the City of Iloilo, its adjacent Municipalities of Leganes, Oton, Pavia, San Miguel and Santa Barbara, and the Province of Guimaras. With a land area of 996.76 sq. kms, it is the regional capital of Western Visayas. On a regional perspective, Western Visayas has a total land area of 20,223.2 sq. kms. and covers six provinces: Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Negros Occidental and Guimaras. The region has 16 cities namely Bacolod, Bago, Cadiz, Escalante, Himamaylan, Kabankalan, La Carlota, Passi, Roxas, Sagay, San Carlos, Silay, Sipalay, Talisay and Victorias, with Iloilo City as the regional capital (National Statistical Coordination Board, <http://www.nscb.gov.ph/ru6/>, retrieved Oct. 1 2011).

Figure 1

Map Metro Iloilo-Guimaras (MIG) Area





Problem Statement and Research Objectives

Improving the quality of urban life through cooperation and partnership is foremost in MIGEDC's vision for the Metropolitan Iloilo – Guimaras area. In the words of MIGEDC "champion" and former Iloilo City Mayor, now Congressman Jerry Treñas, *"good governance at the metropolitan level is an imperative first step toward the pursuit of improved quality of urban life in large cities"*.

It is upon these contexts that this study seeks to find out how metropolitan alliances promote good metropolitan governance. Taking the case of Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Economic Development Council (MIGEDC), this paper will try to study and analyze the alliance's institutional stability, financial sustainability, adherence to good governance norms, and extent of goal achievement as indicators of good metropolitan governance. Thus, this study seeks to answer the main research question as stated:

How does MIGEDC strive to attain good metropolitan governance in terms of institutional stability and financial sustainability, norms of good governance and achieving its functions and goals as a metropolitan alliance?

Such compendium of factors is seen in this study as indicators of a well-managed and governed metropolis which is a prerequisite to an improved quality of urban life. This study will explore and relate these indicators and in the process analyze if these are met and fulfilled by the alliance, thus making it a descriptive-analytical research. The focal point of the study is the practice of good metropolitan governance wherein it seeks to answer the following questions;

(1) Is MIGEDC institutionally stable? Does it manifest strong leadership, participative membership, enabling structures and established purpose, plans and operations? Is the alliance financially sustainable in terms of members' commitment to fund and finance the alliance? Are there determined sources of funds and collection mechanisms? Is the alliance capable of generating its own income and tap external funding sources? Are there established fund management schemes and accountability and transparency in all financial transactions? What are the various strategies by which MIGEDC attains institutional stability and financial sustainability as a metropolitan alliance?



(2) Does MIGEDC adhere to and practice the principles and norms of good governance? Does the alliance practice and promote participation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and transparency? Are there established mechanisms and processes that promote such practice?

(3) In the performance of the alliance's functions and mandates, were the objectives and goals achieved? The extent of goal achievement will be measured in terms of efficiency, equity, economic development, and environmental sustainability characterized as the 4 E's of metropolitan governance as based on Laquian's (1995) study. The alliance's stipulated functions and objectives as compared with its actual performance, especially in the agreed areas of cooperation and priority projects will also be considered.

These three (3) major research questions will eventually determine if good metropolitan governance was achieved and practiced in MIGEDC's pursuit of providing an improved quality of urban life to its constituents. It must be noted that the major research questions are complementary and mutually reinforcing of each other, thus serving as indicators of good metropolitan governance in the context of this study. As such, it is imperative to document and analyze how MIGEDC managed to sustain and maintain its operations, especially its projects and programs since its inception as a voluntary alliance of LGUs contiguous to Iloilo City up to its present-day status as a metropolitan alliance of seven (7) local government units (LGUs) created through Executive Order 559.

In the context of the research problem, the following are the specific objectives of the study: (1) To examine and analyze MIGEDC's stability and sustainability in terms of leadership, membership, legal structures and framework, source of funds, capability to generate own income, resource management, accountability and transparency etc.; (2) To examine and analyze MIGEDC's stability and sustainability in terms of leadership, membership, legal structures and framework, source of funds, capability to generate own income, resource management, accountability and transparency etc.; (3) To identify and examine MIGEDC's good governance practices and mechanisms, especially in their goals and agreed areas of collaboration; (4) To examine and analyze MIGEDC's goal achievement by comparing its actual performance vis-à-vis its stipulated mandates and functions and identified goals and objectives, and; (5) To analyze and

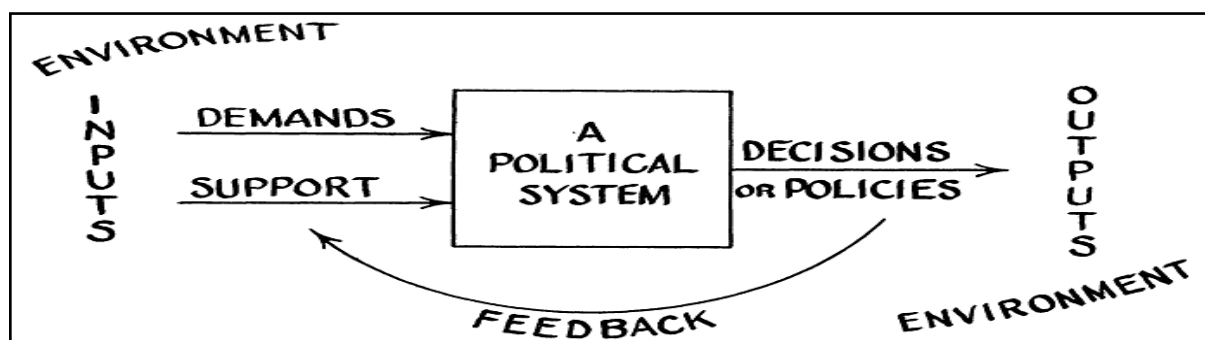
draw vital lessons from the case-study on how to strengthen and sustain metropolitan alliances especially in terms of institutional and financial capacities.

The Research Framework

The framework used in analysis for this study is the systems framework, adapted from David Easton's (1957) "*An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems*". This framework is widely used in analyzing political and policy-making processes, taking into consideration the inputs, process, outputs, and feedback and how these elements relate and affect each other. In the field of public administration, the same framework was also used to analyze the administrative system (e.g. Sharkansky). The strength of the framework can be attributed to its reliance on information theory (input, output, feedback) as it conceives the process of policy-making as being essentially cyclical and as a response of the political system to the forces brought upon it (inputs) from the environment (Easton, 1957). This framework as adopted and applied to the study is illustrated in the diagram in the next page.

Figure 2

Easton's Political Systems Framework



Source: Easton, 1957

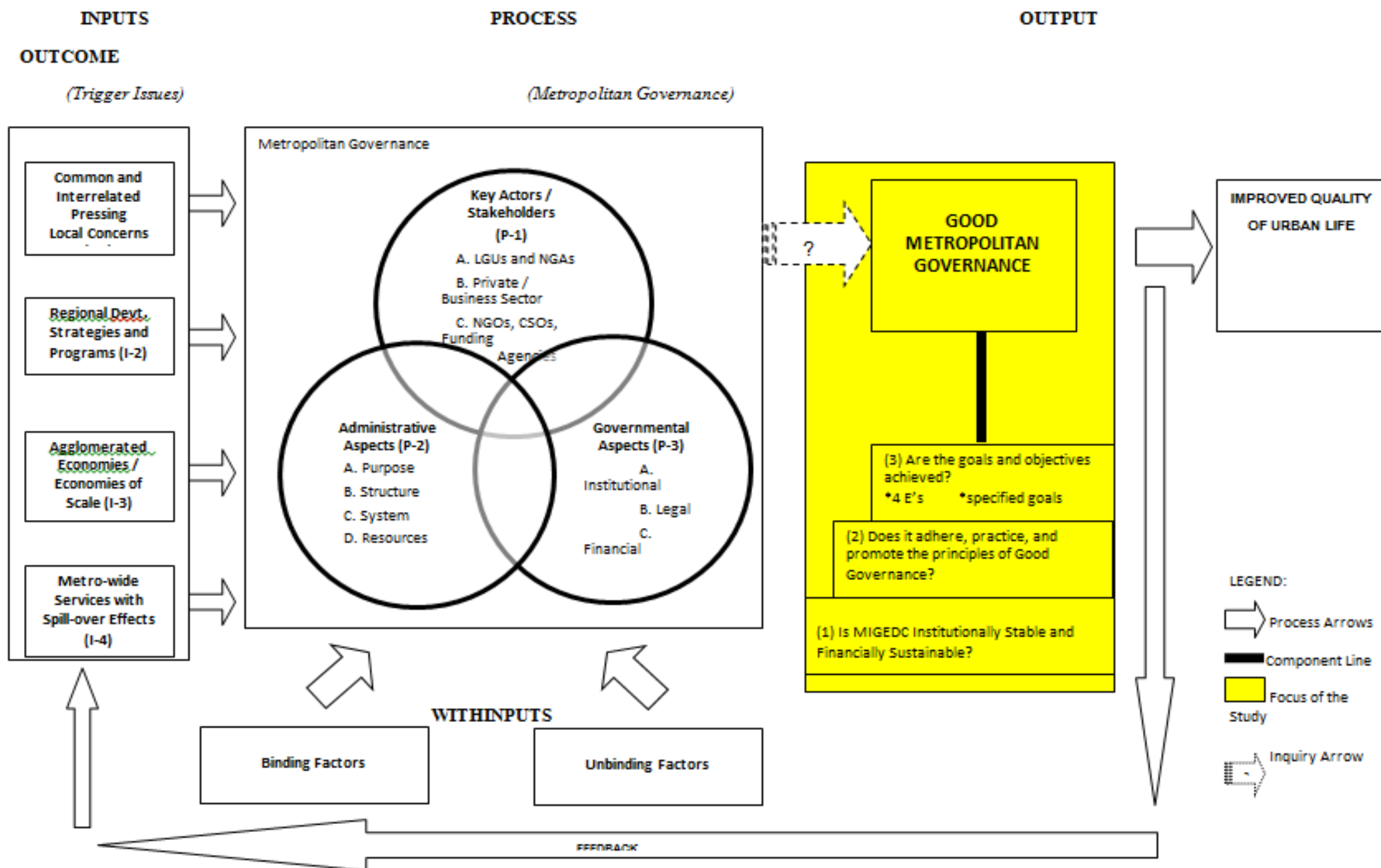
The **inputs** on good metropolitan governance framework were identified as the “trigger issues” – which are general issues and considerations that prompt local government units (LGUs) to group themselves and constitute an alliance. The trigger issues identified were: (1) common



pressing local concerns; (2) regional development strategies and programs; (3) opportunities brought by economies of scale, and; (4) efficient and effective delivery of area-wide services. The **process** component of the framework is the “metropolitan governance process”, which is composed of three (3) interrelated elements: (1) key actors/stakeholders in metropolitan governance; (2) administrative aspects of metropolitan governance, and; (3) governmental aspects of metropolitan governance. The key actors/stakeholders include the local government units (LGUs) and national government agencies (NGAs), the private/business sector, and the greater civil society including non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs) and local and international development organizations and funding agencies. On the other hand, the administrative aspects of metropolitan governance mandate that the alliance should have a common purpose, a coordinating structure, commonly agreed upon systems, and pooled resources. Lastly, the governmental aspects of metropolitan governance include institutional aspects, legal aspects, and financial aspects. Factors that affect and influence the metropolitan governance process are identified in this study as the **withinputs** of the systems framework. These withinputs are termed as the binding and unbinding factors. Binding factors are the factors that brought the alliance members together to work for common goals, while the unbinding factors are identified as irritants and deterrents in the relationship among the members of the alliance.

Figure 3

The Research Framework: Systems Framework on Good Metropolitan Governance





The **output** component of the systems framework is in essence the focal point of this study – that is good metropolitan governance – defined simply as the *desired standards* in the practice of metropolitan governance. In this study, these desired standards are identified as: (1) institutional stability and financial sustainability; (2) practice and adherence to the principles and norms of good governance, and; (3) achievement of goals and objectives. These three (3) factors are seen in this study as indicators and standards of a well managed and governed metropolis, which are prerequisites to achieving an improve quality of urban life. *Institutional stability* mandates that the alliance possesses strong leadership, participative membership, enabling structures and established purpose, plans and operations. On the other hand, *financial sustainability* necessitates commitment to fund and finance the alliance, determined sources of funds, payment and collection mechanisms, capability to generate own income, capability to tap external funding sources, established fund management schemes and accountability and transparency in all financial transactions. Practice and adherence to the norms and principles of good governance was determined based on the major indicators of *participation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability and transparency*. Other indicators of good governance were used as supplementary factors, given that they are all interrelated and mutually reinforcing of the other. Lastly, *achievement of goals and objectives* were analyzed and evaluated through the alliance’s actual performance vis-à-vis the declared functions and mandates and goals and objectives. The agreed areas of collaboration and the general goals and objectives of the alliance as supplemented by Laquian’s (1995) four (4) Es of metropolitan governance were used as key points of analysis on the aspect of achievement of goals and objectives by MIGEDC.

Good metropolitan governance is envisioned to be the answer to the challenges posed by rapid urbanization and the ever-dynamic and changing metropolitan environment. This is perfectly captured by the remark of MIGEDC Champion, Cong. Jerry Treñas that “*good governance at the metropolitan level is the imperative first step towards the pursuit of improved quality of urban life in large cities*”. When good metropolitan governance is practiced by metropolitan alliances like MIGEDC, the very **outcome** of the systems framework – that is, improved quality of urban life – will be attained.



General Findings of the Study

The main research question of this study as stated, sought to answer: *“How does MIGEDC strive to attain good metropolitan governance in terms of institutional stability and financial sustainability, principles and norms of good governance and achieving its functions and goals as a metropolitan alliance?”*. This research question was subdivided into individual research objectives to facilitate better analyses and evaluation. Looking back at the objectives of this study, the study found out the following:

Inputs, process and withinputs

Trigger Issues

Analysis and evaluation of this case study show that for the case of MIGEDC, the dominant trigger issue that led to the formation of the metropolitan alliance was the common pressing local concerns among the member-LGUs. The spillovers of urbanization and its related socio-economic and environmental issues prompted the first of the initiatives to create a metropolitan arrangement/alliance for metropolitan Iloilo. This aspect points to the distinguishing feature that MIGEDC is a locally initiated endeavor of LGUs adjacent and contiguous to Iloilo City to form an alliance to collectively address common concerns brought about by urbanization and its spillovers. The rendering of EO 559 that merged MIDC and GICA to create the MIGEDC was not seen as national government intervention or direct imposition to create a metropolitan body but rather to strengthen the already existing metropolitan alliance by providing it with a legal and binding document that spells-out its mandates, functions, powers and obligations. Moreover, it was found out that the advantages of economies of scale and efficient and effective delivery of urban services were not trigger issues for the case of MIGEDC but rather envisioned as desired effects or outcomes of alliance formation.

Metropolitan Governance Process

In the case of MIGEDC, significant and key stakeholders in metropolitan governance are involved through partnerships and collaboration with the alliances programs, projects and activities. National government agencies like DOT, DPWH, DILG, DTI, NEDA, DOH and HLURB are involved in the alliance. For the private/business sector, the Iloilo Business Club (IBC) and Iloilo Hotels, Restaurants and Resorts Association (IHRRA) are active partners of the



alliance. Stakeholders from the civil society include Iloilo Caucus of Development NGOs, Inc. (ICODE) and Process Foundation, while international development organizations like CIDA, CUI, JICA, AusAID, GTZ and USAID had existing partnerships and collaboration with MIGEDC. Notable on this aspect is the partnership of MIGEDC with CUI, which has been in place since 1994. Undoubtedly, MIGEDC has been the desired platform for program implementation of these international development organizations.

In terms of the administrative aspects of MIGEDC's metropolitan governance its common purpose, coordinating structure, operational systems and pooled resources are specifically defined and clearly laid-out. The alliance's common purpose were underscored in the nine agreed areas of collaboration and imbedded in the comprehensive mission, vision and goal statements of the alliance. MIGEDC's coordinating structure is that of a metropolitan development council structure patterned from that of Metro Naga and Metropolitan Vancouver in Canada. This coordinating structure works perfectly for MIGEDC given its voluntary nature and enabling approach to metropolitan governance. The operational systems of the alliance is embodied and specified in detail in its Operations Manual, which defines the alliance's functional roles, processes and procedures. It is on this aspect that all member-LGUs agreed to take up their functional roles in the alliance; wherein the province of Guimaras is the agri-eco-tourism center, Pavia is the agro-industrial center, Leganes is the center for light industries, San Miguel is the agricultural food basket, Oton is the residential center, Santa Barbara is the international air travel gateway, and Iloilo City will remain as the center of financial, commercial, governance, education, and economic activity. Also it has been found out in this study that MIGEDC's pooled resources is only consisted of the annual members contribution to the alliance – which is the sole source of funds for the alliance.

For the governmental aspects of MIGEDC's metropolitan governance, institutional, legal and financial aspects of the alliance were analyzed. The alliance has established leadership and membership, purpose and structures and plans and operations. Also notable under institutional aspects of MIGEDC is its legal backbone as an alliance. MIGEDC showcases complete legal foundation documents ranging from MOUs, MOAs, legislative concurrences of the Local *Sanggunians* of each of the member-LGU, EO 559 and the pending house bill (HB 3956) authored by Cong. Treñas in the House of Representatives. Lastly, MIGEDC's financial aspect



was found to be heavily reliant and dependent on the annual members' contribution, with no other available sources of funds or alternative income-generating mechanisms at work as of the time of writing.

Binding and Unbinding Factors

For this case study, it has been observed that the binding factors that keep MIGEDC members working together towards a common goal is the common understanding among the members that a metropolitan alliance like MIGEDC is a “necessity”, to borrow the exact words of Cong. Treñas, in order to meet the challenges of urbanization. Also, it has been found out that member-LGUs are starting to get out of their individual-LGU thinking through developing a “metropolitan perspective”, as evidenced by the numerous remarks of interviewed LCEs quoted in using phrases like “*we at MIGEDC*”, “*our metropolitan region*”, “*as a metropolitan area*”, and other collective phrases that connote a wider perspective in viewing local and metropolitan governance. Furthermore, the strong sense of “*barkadismo*” and “*compadre*” system among the member-LGUs of the alliance reinforces their professional relationships with each other.

But this does not spare MIGEDC from irritant issues and deterrents in the relationship of the member-LGUs with each other. It was found out that some unbinding factors include the lack of notable benefits that directly affect their own LGUs or the issue of one LGU benefitting more than the other. But the most significant irritant issue among the alliance members was the issue on traffic management, specifically on the perimeter boundary ordinance implemented by Iloilo City. Such ordinance was seen as “unfair” and “biased” to the interest of Iloilo City only, with some referring to it as a “shotgun law” that all are coerced to follow. On a positive note, it is noteworthy that this issue on traffic management was resolved, and notably MIGEDC was the platform to address the issue. After series of consultations and dialogues with the relevant sectors and stakeholders, a new traffic management plan was agreed by all member-LGUs. This only proves the point that MIGEDC is also an effective venue to resolve conflicting interests of its member-LGUs.



Institutional Stability and Financial Sustainability

Institutional Stability

Based on the findings and evaluation of the elements of institutional stability that includes leadership, membership, structure and purpose, and plans and operations, it has been found out that MIGEDC is institutionally stable. MIGEDC's notable strength as a metropolitan alliance in on the aspect of plans and operations exemplified by its Operation Manual, strategic planning approach, and comprehensive sets of short, medium and long term development plans for the metropolitan region. It was also observed that both leadership and membership are significant strong points of the alliance, where alliance leaders exudes strong local influence, strong relations with alliance members, ability in tapping internal and external sources and leadership stability even with change in political and alliance leadership. Complementing MIGEDC strong leadership is the participative membership observed among the member-LGUs, where members are participative and committed to the alliance, the harmonious and cooperative relationship among alliance members wherein common good is balanced with individual LGU interests, and relative specialization among the member-LGUs' functions in the alliance. On structure and purpose, the strong points of MIGEDC include its established implementing structure duly agreed upon by the members and its comprehensive goals, mission and vision with members having unified and common perception of these goals, mission and vision.

Key areas for improvement under the aspect of institutional stability include the participation and involvement of metropolitan stakeholders and the staff complements of the Secretariat because even with established and legal venues for participation and involvement of other stakeholders in the alliance, these venues are not fully maximized. The Advisory Board, which is composed of representatives from national government agencies (NGAs), provincial government, private/business sectors, academe, and civil society groups and development agencies, was found out to be non-functional. The Board does not meet on a regular basis and if ever they were convened and constituted in actuality remains a big question. The same observation goes for the sectoral representatives in the respective Project Steering Committees of the alliance. Some committees do not have sectoral members, and in instances when there are indicated members from the civil society and private/business sectors, their participation in meetings and activities are either limited or worse, non-existent. On the staff complements of the



MIGEDC Secretariat, both the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director of the MIGEDC Secretariat are only working “part-time” on the alliance. This is because of the fact that they are also full-time employees of the City Government of Iloilo, one as City Planning and Development Officer and the other as Assistant Environment and Natural Resources Officer respectively. The functions and responsibilities they perform in MIGEDC are done on top of their mandated responsibilities as employees of the City Government. Moreover, the Secretariat is obviously understaffed and shorthanded, with just one (1) full time staff and a messenger who are also employees of the City Government assigned in special detail to the alliance secretariat.

Financial Sustainability

In terms of MIGEDC’s financial sustainability as a metropolitan alliance, it was observed that the alliance is relatively sustainable in terms of finances. This relativity is justified on the point that the financial aspects of MIGEDC prove to be sustainable at this point, yet it needs immediate attention and serious reconsideration for it to be financially sustainable on the long-term perspective. Aspects like absence of sanctions and penalties for late or non-payment of member’s contributions and mechanisms and guiding rules for the contribution of non-monetary resources need immediate attention of the Council. MIGEDC is heavily reliant on the annual members’ contribution as their only source of funds. The alliance does not have any steady funding support from the national government and international development agencies. Moreover, MIGEDC was also lacking in terms of other funding mechanisms and options for income generation. The willingness to generate funds outside of the annual members’ contribution is there, but what is seen to be lacking is the translation of these willingness to actual programs. MIGEDC has plans to engage in business-like ventures and partnerships, impose fines, user fees, taxes, penalties and other fund-raising and generating mechanisms to ease the members of the burden of singlehandedly bankrolling the alliance. But as of the time of writing, all these remain as plans yet to be implemented in actuality and the current reality is that annual members’ contribution remains to be the only source of funds by the alliance.

On a more positive note, the financial strengths of MIGEDC as an alliance includes its proper funds management scheme and observance of accountability and transparency in all financial transactions. Findings of this study reveal that MIGEDC has an established fund



management scheme, duly agreed by all the members of the alliance – that is all funds and finances of the alliance are managed by the alliance treasurer selected from the members of the Council. Strict guidelines and processes are observed from the process of remitting of funds to disbursement, accounting and auditing. This is done by the appointed MIGEDC auditor, which is also selected from the members of the Council. Furthermore, utmost accountability and transparency in all financial transactions complement the financial sustainability of the alliance. MIGEDC observes proper recording and auditing of financial transactions done at different levels, from the Project Steering Committees (PSCs), the Secretariat, the alliance Treasurer and Auditor, up to the level of the Executive Council. Financial reports are fully disclosed and made available to the public through the MIGEDC website and posting on the Office of the Secretariat upon approval of the Council. The only flaw seen on this aspect is the frequent non-availability of the MIGEDC website for on-line access, which was found out to be caused by non-regular maintenance and updating of the website.

Practice and Adherence to Good Governance Norms and Principles

Participation

It was observed that MIGEDC promotes active participation of the member-LGUs, promotes community involvement through civic responsibility and healthy competition, provides legal authority and venue for participation and involvement of other sectors of the metropolitan area, and adopts participative mechanisms like consultations, public hearings, surveys, sessions, forum and the likes. Notable under this principle of good governance are the programs and projects of the alliance that invokes community participation. These include the *Pretty Plaza Banwa Gwapa Contest*, the *Best Christmas Decoration Contest* and the *Search for Model Baranggay Tanod*, all done annually. These projects and programs of MIGEDC foster community involvement and civic responsibility through healthy competition and recognition and awards system. Furthermore, the *Search for the Model Baranggay Tanod* was adopted and expanded by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) into a nationwide search. To further improve this program, MIGEDC also expanded the original search to the Model Public Safety and Security Offices and Officers, including categories for police, fire bureau jail officers and rescue volunteers.



Moreover, findings of this study reveal that the aspect of participation that MIGEDC needs to improve on is the involvement of major stakeholders in metropolitan governance. As discussed earlier, MIGEDC's Advisory Board and sectoral representation in the Project Steering Committees (PSCs) are supposed to widen and enhance stakeholder participation in the alliance. Yet, these opportunities for participation are not fully maximized and utilized by the alliance and its stakeholders, as the Advisory Board was found out to be non-functional and almost non-existent while the sectoral representation are limited and in some cases, non-existent as well.

Equity

MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance promotes and adheres to equity in governing the metropolitan region as manifested in having an Operations Manual as a universal guide for all constituents and members of the alliance, promotion of right to equal access to basic services as espoused by the Metro Iloilo Health Alliance (MIHA), promotion of gender equality and sensitivity through the MIGEDC Gender Analysis and Strategy and MIGEDC Gender and Development Focal Team, promotion of equal distribution of economic benefits and advantages through the Iloilo Night Market Program and the functional roles that each member-LGU performs in the alliance, and in promoting pro-poor policies and reasonable preference and protection of the disadvantaged sectors of the metropolitan society through the expanded PhilHealth membership program and the institutional partnership and linkages in providing for the housing needs of the urban poor.

The Metro Iloilo Health Alliance (MIHA) is one of the notable projects of MIGEDC that promote and advance equity in the metropolitan area. Through MIHA's "*two-way referral system*", the alliance ensures that quality and effective health care is made readily accessible and available to the metropolitan constituents, from the level of the health centers up to the level of government hospitals. Also, the expanded PhilHealth membership program which is a component of the MIHA, ensures that even the poor and the marginalized sectors have access to quality health care at minimal or no expense at all, depending on the health service needed. These, among all others previously discussed, promote equity among the citizens of the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras region.



Effectiveness and Efficiency

In terms of effectiveness and efficiency, MIGEDC adheres and promotes this principle of good governance through promoting integrated and inter-sectoral planning and participative budgeting as evidenced by the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Integrated Spatial Development Framework (MIGISDF), Metro Iloilo Guimaras Integrated Urban and Regional Infrastructure Plan (MIG-02), Integrated Tourism Action Plans, and many other integrated and coordinated plans framed and adopted by the alliance. MIGEDC also promotes effectiveness and efficiency in revenue collection and spending and disbursement through the adoption of the Enhanced Tax Revenue and Collection System (ETRACS) and the electronic Business Permit and Licensing System (e-BPLS). Effectiveness and efficiency is also upheld by the alliance through a clearly defined mission-vision statement that guides the overall direction of the alliance, minimal or eradication of duplication and overlapping of functions through clearly delineated functional roles of the member-LGUs, and satisfaction of the metropolitan stakeholders on the overall performance of the alliance.

Moreover, the aspect of effectiveness and efficiency that MIGEDC needs to focus more is on delivery and regulation of public services through partnerships and other forms of venture with the private sector and civil society. Though it was observed that MIGEDC is not lacking in terms of partnership and linkages with development groups and organizations, what was found out to be deficient is the actual partnerships and other forms of joint venture in the delivery of metropolitan services. MIGEDC has indicated in their numerous plans that they are open to ventures and partnerships such as Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT), public-private partnerships (PPP) and the likes. Yet, as discussed earlier, all these remain as plans yet to be implemented and seen in actuality. As of the time of writing, MIGEDC has no existing partnerships and ventures of this kind in the delivery and/or regulation of basic metropolitan services.

Accountability and Transparency

On this aspect of good governance, MIGEDC was observed to adhere and practice utmost accountability and transparency through having established mechanisms that exact and promote accountability and transparency, through publication and dissemination of vital and necessary information to the public, regular and organized consultations and opportunities for



feedback, and established mechanisms for anti corruption like independent audit, accounting and monitoring of the alliance's financial transactions. MIGEDC ensures utmost accountability and transparency by strictly and rigidly following standard government procedures in disbursing and accounting of funds. MIGEDC sees to it that they conduct consultations and public hearings for their metropolitan constituents especially on new projects and programs and on the accomplishments of the alliance. Most notable on MIGEDC practice and adherence to accountability and transparency is the observation that anti-corruption mechanisms of accounting and auditing are embedded in the alliance's organizational structure that complements the standard accounting and auditing done at the individual member-LGU level. Within themselves, MIGEDC Mayors selected and appointed the Municipality of Oton as the alliance treasurer and Municipality of San Miguel as the auditor. These practices were found out to exact accountability and transparency on MIGEDC, especially on its financial transactions.

Furthermore, MIGEDC needs to address the concern of frequent unavailability and not updated contents of the MIGEDC website, in order to further enhance and promote accountability and transparency. Given that the MIGEDC website is utilized by the alliance to publish and disseminate accomplishment reports, accounting and audit findings, financial reports and other significant documents, it is imperative that the MIGEDC must make sure that the platform or venue for information dissemination is available for those who might want to access it. In this case, the alliance must make sure that the MIGEDC website is properly maintained and updated for it to effectively serve its purpose in exacting and promoting accountability and transparency.

Overall findings for practice and adherence to principle and norms of good governance reveal that MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance adheres to and promotes good governance, thus promoting a culture of equity, effectiveness and efficiency, participation, and accountability and transparency. It was also observed that through promotion and adherence to these principles of good governance, MIGEDC evolves to be a paradigm of good governance among metropolitan alliances, thus being more capacitated to meet the challenges of urbanization in pursuit of providing an improved quality of urban life to its metropolitan constituents.



Achievement of Goals and Objectives

On MIGEDC's achievement of goals and objectives as a metropolitan alliance, these were analyzed based on the alliances nine (9) agreed areas of collaboration, its goals as stipulated on EO 559 and other official pronouncements of the alliance, and Laquian's four (4) Es of metropolitan governance which consists of efficiency in the delivery of urban services, equity in the inter-relationships of groups and classes in the urban society, economic development in the mega-urban region, and environmental sustainability in the process of development.

Agreed Areas of Collaboration

In the case of MIGEDC's agreed areas of collaboration, significant efforts and steps were already undertaken by the alliance on every agreed area of collaboration. The researcher observed, and it was confirmed by Executive Director Peñalosa, that each Project Steering Committee (PSCs) in-charged of an area of collaboration has a "pet project" or "pioneering program". For the Committee on Environmental Management, their "pet project" is the newly launched Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Bioregion Initiative, a project done in close coordination with the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) and Tigum-Aganan Watershed Management Board (TAWMB). The Committee on Trade and Investment Promotion banners their Iloilo Investment Promotion Center (IIPC) which is a partnership among MIGEDC member-LGUs, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Iloilo Business Club (IBC), Iloilo Hotels Restaurants and Resorts Association (IHRRA), and other major urban stakeholders. It is a body tasked to promote the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras region as an ideal investment destination. The Committee on Basic Services Delivery considers the Metro Iloilo Health Alliance (MIHA) as their "pet project", pushing for an efficient and effective delivery of basic health services through the "two-way referral system".

On the other hand, the Land Use Planning and Management Committee boast the Metro Iloilo Guimaras Integrated Spatial Development Framework (MIGISDF) as its priced project, together with its subsidiary plan, the Metro Iloilo Land Use Framework (MILUF) and the Metro Iloilo Physical Framework Plan (MIPFP). The Committee on Infrastructure Development considers the Metro Iloilo Flood Control Project and the Circumferential Road Network as the "pet projects" of the committee, while Public Safety and Security Committee is very proud of its



Annual Search for the Model *Baranggay Tanod* which they already expanded into the Search for the Model Public Safety and Security Offices and Officers. The Committee on Tourism Development pioneers the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Integrated Tourism Action Plan, the Central Business District Revitalization, and the Experience Iloilo Guimaras Program. The Metro Iloilo Integrated Transport Development and Traffic Management Plan and the eventual implementation of the improved Perimeter Boundary Ordinance are achievements of the Traffic Management and Transport Development Committee. Lastly, the Committee on Special Projects boasts their existing and lasting linkages and partnerships they forged with different agencies and organizations, both local and foreign.

MIGEDC's Goals as a Metropolitan Alliance

MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance is an effective and efficient body in formulating, coordinating and monitoring of programs, projects and activities for the acceleration of economic growth and development of the metropolitan area. Findings of this study reveal that MIGEDC has formulated comprehensive and integrated plans for each agreed area of collaboration. The MIGEDC Spatial Development Plan, MIGEDC Roadmap 2010 and 2015, Integrated Urban Infrastructure Plan, Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, Downtown CBD Revitalization Plan, Guimaras-Iloilo Ferry Terminal System Plan, Growth Corridor Framework, Metro Iloilo Traffic Management Study, MIGEDC Capacity Building Plan, Investment Portfolio, Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Integrated Spatial Development Framework (MIGISDF) and Metro Iloilo-Guimaras Integrated Urban and Regional Infrastructure Plan (MIG-02) all point to the aspect that MIGEDC is the collective platform in the formulation of these plans. All of these plans and frameworks embody collaboration among member-LGUs through integration and coordination of services to achieve metropolitan development.

Also, MIGEDC as an alliance continues to address the area's emerging problems brought about by rapid urbanization and the spatial development challenges of tourism and economic development. Findings of the study reflect that the emerging problems of the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras region are consist of the socio-economic and environmental effects of urbanization and the spillovers brought about by rapid urbanization. These emerging problems range from concerns on traffic congestion, worsening air quality, inadequate potable water supply,



deficiencies in solid waste management, environmental degradation and flooding, and growing poverty and inequality. To effectively address these concerns, MIGEDC has classified and categorized this based on the agreed areas of collaboration. Also, the assumption of the functional roles of each member-LGU was built on the perspective of comprehensively addressing the metropolitan area's emerging concerns.

Lastly, as a metropolitan alliance in one of the most vibrant and active economies of the country, MIGEDC was able to carry out and formulate, implement, coordinate and monitor programs, projects and activities that support the Mega-region Economic Development Strategy of the national government, wherein the Metro Iloilo Guimaras region was identified as the center of tourism. Analysis and findings of the study points that the naming of the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras region as “festival capital of the Philippines” and the implementation of the “Experience Iloilo-Guimaras” program were all built around the mega-regions strategy of the national government. The promotion and development of sustainable tourism in the metropolitan region is consonant and complementary to the mega-regions strategy of the national government, which provides justification why MIGEDC was found out to put due emphasis on this goal.

Four Es of Metropolitan Governance

In the performance of its functions and goals, MIGEDC satisfies the four (4) Es of metropolitan governance as identified by Laquian (1995). Efficiency in the delivery of urban services was achieved by MIGEDC through coordination and collaboration of metropolitan services like health services, transport and traffic management, tourism initiatives, public safety and security, among others. On the other hand, equity in the inter-relationships of groups and classes in the urban society is promoted by the alliance through Gender and Development initiatives, providing social safety nets for the poor and underprivileged, making available essential metropolitan services to those who could not afford and not capacitated to access such services, and the like. Furthermore economic development of the metropolitan region is promoted by various programs and projects by MIGEDC like the Panay Area Business Development, Iloilo Investment Promotion Center, Tourism Promotion initiatives, and the Downtown Revitalization Project. Lastly, environmental sustainability is ensured by MIGEDC through adoption of environmental programs and projects like the bioregions approach. In



summary, it has been found out through this study that some achievements and accomplishments of the alliance transcend set indicators and targets. It has been observed that MIGEDC member-LGUs are more capacitated and able in facing daunting urban challenges. Also, improved capacities of LGUs and their leaders resulted to earning distinctions and recognitions of good governance and good leadership and other awards.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the analysis and evaluation of MIGEDC's pursuit of good metropolitan governance, the following can be concluded:

1. The creation of MIGEDC was **triggered by common pressing local concerns** of the metropolitan area, which was predominantly in addressing the problems brought about by rapid urbanization and its spillovers. The problems identified include traffic congestion, worsening state of metropolitan environment, inadequate potable water supply, deficiencies in solid waste management, environmental degradation and flooding, and growing poverty and inequality;

2. The institutional, legal and financial aspects of the MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance are interrelated and thus reinforcing of its purpose, structure, systems and resources. These aspects of metropolitan governance are enhanced and developed by the collaborative and healthy interaction of the governmental actors, private/business sectors and the civil society that serve as the foundation in which a metropolitan alliance is built on. Moreover, MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance is influenced by binding and unbinding factors that affect relationships inside and outside of the alliance. Thus, it is stressed that binding factors should be strengthened by the alliance while the unbinding factors should be corrected or mitigated;

3. As a metropolitan alliance, MIGEDC is institutionally stable as manifested by strong and influential leadership, participative membership, enabling organizational structure and established purpose, plans and operations. Also, MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance is relatively sustainable in terms of finances, with relativity justified on the grounds that the financial aspects of MIGEDC prove to be sustainable at this point, yet it needs immediate attention and serious reconsideration for it to be financially sustainable in the long-term;

4. MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance exemplifies being a paradigm of good governance through promotion of a culture of equity, participation, effectiveness and efficiency and



accountability and transparency. MIGEDC's practice and adherence to the norms and principles of good governance radiates the prominence of good governance as the crucial link to metropolitan development;

5. As a work-in-progress and developing metropolitan alliance, MIGEDC continually achieves its goals and objectives in the performance of its mandated functions through its agreed areas of collaboration, general goals and objectives, and the four (4) Es of metropolitan governance, and;

6. MIGEDC as a metropolitan alliance remains to be a promising platform of coordinated and integrated approach to metropolitan governance thus providing an improved quality of urban life to the citizens and constituents of the Metro Iloilo-Guimaras region.

In the light of the analysis, findings and conclusions of this case-study on the pursuit of good metropolitan governance by MIGEDC, the following recommendations and policy considerations are rendered to alliance-building and metropolitan alliances in general:

1. It is highly recommended for highly urbanized cities and its contiguous and adjacent LGUs to **locally** initiate the formation of a metropolitan alliance, inter-local cooperation, or any alliance of similar nature. Also, the national government through its appropriate agencies like DILG should encourage the formation of such alliances, especially to those identified as parts of the mega/super-regions economic development strategy;

2. Existing alliances should be improved and strengthened, based on institutional, financial and legal aspects. These existing alliances should be cited and recognized for good practice so that it will encourage and inspire replication on LGUs aspiring to build one. Also, study tours and knowledge and expertise exchange should be encouraged to further strengthen inter-local and metropolitan alliances, and;

3. That aside from the guiding principles from the 1987 Constitution and the 1991 Local Government Code, more enabling laws on metropolitan governance and alliance-building should be drafted by the appropriate governmental agencies (Congress / Senate). These enabling laws should contain stipulations on funding and institutional support coming from the national government to jumpstart the creation of these alliances

For Metro Iloilo Guimaras Economic Development Council (MIGEDC), the following specific recommendations are suggested:



Structure and Organization

1. The alliance should consider reconstituting and strengthening its Advisory Board in order to enhance participation of the civil society and the private/business sectors. The Advisory Board should also meet in a regular basis (say at least once every quarter) for it to function and become an effective source of policy advice and information for the Executive Council.

2. Sectoral representation in every Project Steering Committee (PSC) should be strictly observed in order to enhance participation from the metropolitan stakeholders. These sectoral representatives are the ones that embody the interest of their sectors in the respective PSCs. For instance, for the Committee on Traffic Management and Transportation Development, sectoral representatives should come from the transport sector, for instance the President of the Public Utility Vehicles Owners and Drivers Association.

3. MIGEDC should consider hiring a full time Executive Director to head and supervise the day-to-day businesses of the alliance. The current Executive Director is working with the alliance on a “part time” basis given his responsibilities and obligations as the City Planning and Development Officer for Iloilo City. Given the workload of supervising and coordinating MIGEDC’s activities, programs and projects, it is but imperative to hire a full-time Executive Director for MIGEDC. Also, MIGEDC needs to consider hiring full-time staff for the Secretariat in order to make it more effective and sustainable body for coordination of the alliance’s day-to-day activities.

4. MIGEDC should look at the need to secure a larger and separate office space for the alliance Secretariat. Currently, the secretariat shares office space with the City Planning and Development Office in the new Iloilo City Hall. This set-up is understandable and imperative as of now given that the MIGEDC Executive Director is also the head of the City Planning and Development Office. But once the alliance, gets to hire full-time Executive Director and staff to man the everyday business of the secretariat, it should consider securing a separate and larger office space of its own.

5. In the long-term, the MIGEDC might want to consider rotating the alliance leadership, say every 3 years. Though in the case of MIGEDC, the selection of leaders was consensually agreed by all members, it does not remove the possibility that the other members of the alliance may develop a “big brother” dependency to the leading LGU. Aside from rotating leadership, the



alliance may also want to regularly rotate among themselves the responsibility of acting as Treasurer and Auditor of the alliance. This will facilitate healthy distribution of responsibilities among the member-LGUs.

Management and Implementation

1. MIGEDC should consider adding stipulations and guidelines in the Operations Manual to govern funding and finance-related aspects. For instance, it would be rational to institutionalize and to put into writing the imposing of fines, sanctions and penalties for delayed or non-payment of the annual contribution. In this way, the alliance could invoke the binding legality of the document, in case there are cases of late or non-payment of contributions.

2. The alliance should also draft clearer guidelines on pooling and sharing of resources, especially non-monetary resources like office spaces, personnel complements, equipments, office supplies and the likes.

3. MIGEDC should find other ways to finance and bankroll the alliance, as the danger of “donor fatigue” can possibly happen in the case of the member-LGUs, given that the alliance is heavily reliant on the members’ annual contribution. MIGEDC can seek funding from the national government through the GAA (which is part of the proposed HB 3956 of Cong Treñas), but given the tedious nature in asking for funding through legislation, the alliance might want to consider alternative ways to generate income. One could be on exacting user fees, fines, penalties, taxes and the likes of integrated services delivered or regulated by the alliance. Another could be to engage in business-like ventures and partnerships with the private sector. To recall, the alliance is seen to be open to this possible alternative source of income, as embodied on their plans and development frameworks. If this is so, engaging in private-public-partnerships and other business-like ventures is just a matter of implementing and putting the plans into action.

4. In line with finding other sources of income and implementing planned public-private-partnerships and other business-like ventures, MIGEDC can assign this specific task to the Committee on Special Project Planning and Development to be given due priority.

5. MIGEDC should always make sure that the alliance website is properly maintained and updated. Also in the light of the emergence of social media as powerful platforms of accountability and transparency, the alliance might want to think about setting-up a Facebook



page and /or Twitter account. Through this, the alliance makes itself more accessible to its constituents in the digital world.

Agenda for Future Studies

Future researches on inter-local alliances and metropolitan governance can possibly look at the most common concern of most alliances in the Philippines – that of lack of funds and absence of institutionalized financial support from the national government. Possible research inquiry can start with looking at the idea of earmarking specific percentages of the LGUs IRA to serve as automatic source of fund of alliances. Also, future studies on the same matter can be focused on analyzing possible amendments on the Local Government Code of 1991 to introduce specific stipulations governing inter-local and metropolitan alliances.

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