

Philippines Local Government –The Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators are a set of measures jointly developed by the [La Salle Institute of Governance \(LSIG\)](#) and [Global Integrity](#) to assess the strengths and weaknesses of mechanisms for transparency and accountability in local governance.

With the city/municipal level as the basic unit of analysis, the indicators systematically identify best practices and areas for improvement, thereby empowering local stakeholders to plan and implement evidence-based policy and institutional reforms towards improvements in transparency and accountability in local governance.

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The indicators revolve around the assessment of mechanisms for transparency and accountability. By mechanisms, we mean rules, organizations, structures, and processes that deter abuse of power and promote transparency and accountability in governance. The Philippines local indicators therefore assess the safeguards that are in place to foster greater public transparency and accountability.

Local governance is a shared process of addressing common goals, problems, and concerns in a local community. Consistent with this view, it is not the intention of this assessment to evaluate the performance of specific local government officials *per se*. The indicators do include the important roles of mayors and other city/municipal officials in promoting transparency and accountability. They also try to capture the role that other groups and institutions, including the national government and local stakeholders, assume in good local governance.

Background

The Philippines present an intriguing case of local governance reform because of its experiments with decentralization and grass roots participatory democratic governance, especially with the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991. The Code provides local governance/administrative units of municipalities and provinces, i.e., the barangay, more autonomy in fiscal, executive, and legislative decision-making. Stress is placed throughout on active citizen participation in local governance such as the delivery of public services. Despite the importance of the devolution of power to local governance units, however, there are still relatively few empirical studies of the operations of local governance particularly at the barangay level (Rodriguez 2009: 48). These indicators are a contribution to building more robust evidence-based studies of Philippines local governance.

Ultimately, the local assessments aim to generate data that could be used in discussions about policy and institutional reforms that promote greater transparency and accountability in local governance. The overall goal is to contribute to these discussions both within the local areas included in the assessment, as well as outside these areas, whether at the national level or in other cities and municipalities in the country.

How We Did It

Ten municipalities were assessed: Balanga City, Carmen, Lapu Lapu City, Lawann-Eastern Samar, Miag ao-Iloilo, Quezon City, Santa Maria-Laguna, Tacurong City-Sultan Kudarat, Taytay-Rizal, and Zamboanga City.

The indicators are based on an extensive review of the transparency and accountability literature, and an examination of what are relevant in the Philippine local context. These mechanisms comprise “best practices” for improving

transparency and accountability that have been found to work well in various parts of the Philippines and internationally.

The indicators, taken in their entirety, aim to capture the extent to which these mechanisms for improving transparency and accountability are in place (existence indicators), whether the design of these mechanisms indicate that they are likely to work (effectiveness indicators), and whether citizens are able to adequately utilize these mechanisms (access indicators). The Philippines local indicators therefore contain a combination of de jure and de facto indicators that look at laws and institutions “on the books,” as well as their implementation and enforcement in practice.

In all, the Philippines local indicators include a total of 205 specific indicator questions. These indicators are spread over six categories representing various aspects of transparency and accountability in local governance. The categories are as follows:

- Civil Society, Public Information and Media
 - Local Elections
 - Local Government Accountability
 - Local Fiscal Processes
 - Local Civil Service
 - Local Regulatory Functions
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