STATISTICS IN GOVERNANCE: THE GUIMARAS COMMUNITY-BASED RURAL TOURISM PROGRAM

by

Jimmy S. Baban

For additional information, please contact:

Author’s name
Jimmy S. Baban

Designation
Provincial Planning & Development Coordinator

Affiliation
Province of Guimaras
The Community-Based Rural Tourism (CBRT) Program is one of the strategies of the Guimaras Provincial Government to contribute to the realization of its provincial vision of making the island the agri-tourism capital of the region. It aims to help reduce poverty by strengthening local governance. The program was started more than ten years ago, at Guisi (Nueva Valencia) where a pilot CBRT was organized to be a model at community empowerment and local economic development. Today, the province is assisting more than twenty additional replication CBRTs in all of its five municipalities, develop their own brand of local economic support base. These include 3 CBRT’s in Jordan, 11 CBRT’s in Buenavista, 11 CBRT’s in Nueva Valencia, one in Sibunag and 2 in San Lorenzo.

While there are visible signs (increase in number of CBRT’s, membership, increase in number of visitors to the place/barangay, bigger attendance to barangay festivals)(figure 1) of improvement attributable to the CBRT project in more mature focus barangays, most of these development cannot be quantified. One of the reasons for this gap is the non-identification of objectively verifiable indicators which will help in the assessment of the results of the CBRT intervention in barangay economic development. Another factor is the absence or inadequate benchmark data against which any development, or lack of it, can be measured.

The project: “Status of CBRT in the Province of Guimaras” is one attempt to fill this gap. For this purpose, the province is tapping on the resources generated by its partnership arrangement with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), for a Local Governance Support Program for Economic Development (LGSP-LED) initiative in agri-tourism (CBRT) circuit development. The arrangement targets improvement in local conditions for sustainable local economic development. This is achieved by the development of LGU corporate management skills and by developing the agricultural and fishery activities into tourist attractions, supported by ecotourism attractions.

With logistical support from the LGSP-LED, the project was conceptualized to generate primary data on the socio-economic conditions of the population in the CBRT barangays, using selected demographic and socio-economic indicators.

However, due to constraints in time and funds, the project only focused on the five (5) CBRT barangays where the LGSP-LED has direct exposure in terms of capability building and economic infrastructure support (figure 2). These beneficiary barangays are located in four municipalities and are of varying degrees of maturity as far as organizational functionality and CBRT project implementation skills are concerned. Three of these barangays are coastal and the remaining two are inland (figure 3).
A household census was conducted in mid January to early February 2010, using a field-tested and LGSP-LED approved questionnaire patterned after the Local Enhancement and Development (LEAD) for Health instrument. The census enumerators were selected youth and Barangay Health Workers of the barangays where they will be assigned. All of them were required to undergo training in census administration and questionnaire appreciation, including proper way of doing face-to-face interviews. As the census was conducted close to the national elections, the enumerators were reminded not to engage in political discussions with their respondents. They were also subjected to practical work by their participation in mock field census activity.

Actual census work lasted between seven days to a little more than two weeks, depending on the population of the barangay, the availability of the census enumerators, and the distances between houses. As a general rule, an enumerator was expected to take census data of about ten households per day.

Results of the census (filled up questionnaires) were then submitted to the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) for validation, encoding, and processing using SPSS program. In cases where inconsistencies in the information contained in the filled up questionnaires were detected, clarification on the entries were made with the census enumerator concerned, or whenever necessary, with the census respondents. Meanwhile, needed information particularly barangay data which cannot be generated in the census were collected through focus group discussion involving key respondents.

In all these processes, we have enlisted the services of experts from the academe (UP Visayas), who have contributed valuable inputs, during all phases of the project implementation.

The result of the census is presented and grouped into five categories namely: Family structure, Family Income, Food-related indicators, Other asset-based indicators, and others. There are 26 attributes under Family structure, which includes among others, age and sex distribution, marital status and main occupation of household members.

The subject barangays of the study are Hoskyn and Lawi in Jordan, Salvacion in Buenavista, San Roque in Nueva Valencia, and Sapal in San Lorenzo.

Hoskyn is an urbanized coastal barangay adjacent to the Poblacion in Jordan. It has an area of 2.84 sq. km. and a population of 2,243. Most of the population are concentrated on the narrow strip of land bordering the western coast facing the City of Iloilo, because much of the area has a slope of more than 18 degrees. Hoskyn hosts a hotel, and is the site of the only roll on roll off (RORO) facility in the island.

Lawi on the other hand lies on the western border of Jordan, is also a coastal community, and is __ km. away from Brgy. San Miguel, the identified primary growth center of the province. Lawi has a population of 1,416 in an area of 5.29 sq. km. Its population density is 267 persons per sq.km. Fish is abundant in the adjacent Lawi cove, and a fish landing facility is being constructed in the area. One of its sitios (Lusay) is also the identified breeding place of sea turtles (pawikan).

San Roque in Nueva Valencia figured prominently as one of the hardest hit barangays during the oil spill tragedy last August 2006. It is situated in the southwestern
part of the island, has an area of 6.44 sq. km., and a population count of 1,600. San Roque
economy is primarily based on the sea, and it is also the site of the only network of
integrated protected area system (NIPAS) in the province. The usual mode of transportation
is motorcycle, and there are only two jeepneys serving the barangay which makes two trips
daily to the town proper.

Barangay Salvacion in Buenavista is situated along the growth corridor starting from
the municipal wharf up to the town center. A large portion of the barangay has been
identified as commercial zone, with visible signs of urbanization from the presence of
medium scale business establishments. Gas stations, hardware stores, groceries and
grooming parlors as well as repair shops are in the barangay. It is among the most populous
in the province with a population of 3,527 in an area of 4.45 sq.km. It also had the most
number of households, and in terms of population density, Salvacion also came out as the
densest (792 persons/sq. km).

Sapal is an inland barangay of the young municipality of San Lorenzo. Farming is an
important activity and, except in the barangay proper, there are wide tracts of
underdeveloped land. It is the biggest in terms of area (13.41 sq.km) among the five pilot
CBRT barangays, and is the least dense with a population density of only 107 persons per
sq.km.

Census results show that most households in the pilot barangays are headed by the
males (82.2%) indicating a patriarchal family structure. The number of households with the
females being considered as household heads is also significant (17.8%). This ratio is
almost the same for all the five barangays.

In all the barangays, the males outnumbered the females although only by a slight
difference: Hoskyn (51.8%) Lawi (51.1%), San Roque (51.9%) Salvacion (50.5%) Sapal
(51.8%) (figure 6).

As to age distribution of household members by sex, the males aged 29 years and
below outnumbered the females in all five barangays. However, on the average, the
females aged 50 years and above outnumbered the males (figures 7, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d). The
females seem to be outliving the males in the barangays covered.

More males than females finished their elementary grade education. In fact up to the
third year in high school, there are more males than their female counterparts. The females
on the other hand seem to continue their schooling (after the third year in high school) such
that more females actually graduate from high school and go to/finish 4 or 5 years of college
education (figures 8, 8a, 8b)

In four of the barangays, there are more household members aged to 3 - 33 years
who are enrolled in various levels of the educational system (pre-school, elementary,
secondary, and tertiary), than those who are not. However, in barangay Hoskyn, there are
more out of school household members in the same age category (figure 9)

Providing skilled labor such as carpentry, masonry and related field is one of the
most common main occupation of residents who are of working age. Another is private
employment which scores high in barangays Hoskyn, San Roque and Salvacion. Fishing as
expected is popular in San Roque and Lawi, but not in Hoskyn which is also a coastal
barangay. Instead, Hoskyn has the most number of boatmen, as it supplies most of the
boatman requirements of pumpboats plying the Guimaras-Iloilo route. Sapal has a large
number of residents engaged in handicraft making (weaving), and Salvacion has also a large
population of drivers. Housekeeping is the most common occupation in all barangays,
although the monetary value of this activity is not quantified. Under the ‘others’ category are
the students who also comprise a large percentage of the population, as well as the
unemployed members of the community. (figure 10). An emerging source of income is
remittances from overseas workers which in barangay Salvacion, is being enjoyed by 135
households.

Salvacion being the most matured among the pilot barangays has the most number
of CBRT members. This is followed by Sapal which, despite being new, has been
aggressive in its membership campaign, and promotion of its banner product (bariw-woven
products) and festival. (figure 11).

Salvacion residents had also the most number of tourism-related trainings attended,
followed by Sapal. (figure 12). This is partly because Salvacion CBRT is also a recipient of
an earlier tourism development project with the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) assistance.

On the average, there are less than five members per household in the 5 pilots
barangays. Most households have between 2 -7 members. Barangay San Roque has the
highest average household size of 4.9 members. It is followed by barangay Hoskyn with 4.8
members, then barangay Lawi with 4.5 members. Incidentally these three barangays are
coastal barangays. These figures are lower than the provincial average household size of
5.14 persons/household computed using the 2000 NSO census result. (figure 13).

About 80% of the households in the pilot barangays earn no more than ten thousand
pesos (P10,000.00) a month. The poorest is barangay is Sapal with 93.6% of the
households belonging to that income category. On the other hand, in barangay Salvacion,
only 58% of its households are earning less than that amount per month. In fact, ten
households in the barangay have been reported to be having incomes of more than
P100,000.00 a month. (figure 14).

The other three barangays have the following percentages of households earning at
most ten thousand pesos a month: Hoskyn 75.8%, Lawi 83.7%,and San Roque 81.4%.

Household incomes were reported as the total coming from various sources such as
farm, off-farm and non-farm.

Under the food related indicators, it was gathered that, while there are a number of
households which have not served meat in the seven days prior to the census. as far
barangay Salvacion is concerned, a good number of households serve meat almost
everyday. This is also true in the case of barangay Hoskyn, although in a much lower
frequency. Both barangays are located less than 3 kilometers away from the fresh meat
markets of their respective municipalities. Both barangays also registered the lowest number
of households earning at most ten thousand pesos a month. (figure 15)

Interestingly in barangay San Roque, the coastal barangay of Nueva Valencia where
more than 80% of the households earn less than P10,000.00 a month, households can
serve special sea food three to four days a week. Special sea food includes lobster, prawns, crabs, high value fish such as lapu-lapu, lison as well as imbao. (figure 16)

Under dwelling related indicators, most households own the dwelling units where they are staying. (figure 17)

A good number of them also own the lot where their houses are built while about the same number have erected their houses within the common property of their families. Squatting is beginning to be defined in Guimaras, as all 5 barangays have squatters. In fact there are more squatters than non-squatters in barangay Hoskyn. (figure 18)

Barangays Sapal and Lawi are not served by level 2 or 3 water supply systems which explain the predominance of dug wells in these barangays. Baranagy Hoskyn has 2 sources of piped water: one is from the water district while the other is from the barangay-operated water system. Two sitios in barangay San Roque are also enjoying piped water from level 2 water supply system. Brgy Salvacion has a level 3 water supply system from the local water district but there are a number of households which obtain their water from shared faucet (level 2). (figure 19)

There are still households in Guimaras with no toilet facility. Barangays Sapal, San Roque and Lawi can be good examples. Most of the households have water-sealed toilets in their houses while a number share toilets with all other households. (figure 20)

Six of the most common appliances/electronic gadgets owned by the households are cellular phones, TV sets, electric fans, radios, refrigerators and cd, vcd dvd players, in that order. It is interesting to note that even in barangay San Roque where in a number areas one cannot get a good/reliable signal from any of the top three cellular phone companies, ownership of cellular phones is second only in TV sets. (figure 21)

The other Asset-based indicators would include agricultural land ownership by household, number and type of motor vehicles owned, number of poultry animals and livestock raised.

In the other indicators, there still a big percentage of dogs in the barangays which are not vaccinated. (figure 22)

The results of the census offer interesting insights on the present features of selected CBRT barangays in Guimaras. They will also provide the baseline data against which results of a similar census scheduled to be conducted in the second quarter of 2012 (or one year after the end of phase I LGSP-LED intervention) will be analyzed. The follow up census will be employing the same methodology and census instrument (with minor modifications).

Among the modifications to be incorporated include the further splitting of the lowest category of income classification, to draw a clearer picture of the extent of poverty in the barangays piloted.

The two sets of data will we compared to determine the effects of the LGSP-LED intervention on the development and sustainability of the CBRT model in Guimaras.

Already, the LGSP-LED has initiated the following interventions in the pilot barangays:
1. Product Development and Marketing training

2. Financial Management training

3. Homestay Development

4. CBRT Strategic Enterprise Planning

5. Agri-tourism Appreciation and Customer Service Training

6. Team Building (separate sessions for each CBRT)

7. Culinary Arts and Food Handling training

8. Festival Management

The expected intermediate outcome of this exercise is improved local conditions for sustainable local economic development. Per agreed schedule among the contracting entities (Province of Guimaras, DILG and CIDA), by March 2011, the agri-tourism circuit LED model will be developed and transformed into agri-tourism destinations featuring community-based rural tourism sites which contribute to the development of people and communities empowered to be the stewards of their natural resources, and earning additional income from these resources through developed CBRT enterprises.

Realistically, the LGSP-LED initiative alone cannot realize these expected outputs. Neither will the CBRT’s, notwithstanding the trainings given them. A number of other factors will have to come into play, in order to make good the objectives of the program. Foremost among these is the support of the government in terms of policy pronouncements such as prioritization of developed barangay products in the promotions blitz it is undertaking, or in the inclusion of these barangays (once they have proven to meet the criteria requirements) in the provincial agri-tourism circuit.

Sustainability and further replicability of the CBRT program will depend largely on in-depth analysis of the empirical data as well as the qualitative information collected, given the range of statistical parameters available.

The project illustrates how good governance can further be enhanced by statistics, and how statistical data can be harnessed to effect informed decision making, hence judicious use of finite resource.