

## MODULE 2:

### ASSESSING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXTS



2.5 hrs.



#### MODULE OVERVIEW:

This module focuses on building an understanding and assessing the barangay or municipality's governmental, institutional and political as well as socio-economic and environmental contexts. A comprehensive thorough understanding of the said contexts would challenge the participants later to effectively pursue planning and budgeting processes as entry points for mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages in their own local government. This stage also provides opportunities for LGUs to pinpoint potential partners, advocates and supporters in their effort to carry out the mainstreaming of poverty-environment linkages.



#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Describe the importance of analysis of the various contexts of the local government in order to assess the readiness to pursue mainstreaming;
- Demonstrate the ability to identify the planning processes, institutions, actors and mandates, policies and other factors that influence positively or negatively the mainstreaming effort, and
- Utilize the socio-economic and environmental information of the local government towards the identification of entry points for mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages.

#### MODULE PREREQUISITE:

The activities in this module will use relevant data available from reports and records in the local government key offices that are used in the local government's planning process. As facilitator, you need to ensure that copies are available for the small group activities. Inform the participants that they can refer to the **CBMS (community based monitoring systems) data**, which normally are used to prepare annual investment plans and prioritize projects for poverty reduction, to evaluate the impacts of their projects, and to prepare for emergencies. LGUs were directed to adopt the 13 core local poverty indicators as the minimum set of community-based information for poverty diagnosis and planning at the local level. Hence, it is wise for participants to make these data available during the assessment process.



#### MODULE CONTENTS:

1. Justifying the assessment of local government contexts;
2. Assessing governmental, institutional, socioeconomic, political and environmental contexts of local governments, and
3. Identifying entry points in local development planning.



## KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS!

- ❖ **Planning processes.** Planning processes shape a municipality or provincial's development and environmental priorities. Relevant processes might include strategies (municipal development plans, municipal sustainable development strategies, MDG strategies, sector strategies), action plans (provincial/municipal environmental action plans, provincial/municipal adaptation programs of action) and budget processes
- ❖ **Institutions and actors.** This includes the various institutions and actors in government, the non-governmental sector and the broader development community and their activities. Included also are partners that can provide technical, financial and political support to the mainstreaming effort.
- ❖ **Mandates and decision-making processes.** Concerned with how the local government develops and approves policies, budgets and related measures. It also includes information on how the environment sector or office is involved in the development of policies initiated by other offices that have significant environmental implications (the agricultural sector plan is one such policy). Informal power relations are also part of it.
- ❖ **Existing policies and initiatives.** This concerns with major existing provincial/municipal and sectoral (e.g. agriculture, health, education, industrial development, cleaner production and environment) development policies, programs and projects, and climate change-related initiatives, that are relevant to the poverty-environment mainstreaming effort, and the possible conflicting priorities.
- ❖ **Governance and political situation.** Natural resources typically are important sources of national wealth, and different institutions and actors often have conflicting priorities concerning access to or control of their use. This aspect concerns with the political factors that may affect the mainstreaming effort either positively or negatively. These factors include the transparency and accountability of decision-making concerning natural resource management and the resulting distributional impacts. It also includes the legislative and judicial systems, the rule of law and corruption control in the local government. In addition are the short-term political drivers such as upcoming elections, changes in mandates or roles, possible competition among agencies or departments and other governance factors.
- ❖ **State of the environment.** This refers to the conditions of the environment and current and emerging environmental challenges such as climate change.
- ❖ **Socio-economic situation.** These are baseline data on poverty and population's socioeconomic status, including data disaggregated by demographics such as age, sex and geographical location.
- ❖ **Poverty-environment linkages.** These are the linkages between poverty and the environment (e.g. main ecosystem services, food security, vulnerability to effects of climate change, deforestation, livelihoods of men and of women), focusing on national development priorities.

❖ **Poverty-environment sector linkages.** This focuses on the relevance of the environment to human well-being and pro-poor economic growth and development sectors, such as agriculture, forestry, water and sanitation, industrial development, health, trade, transport, energy, education and tourism.

❖ **Benefits and costs of action and inaction.** These are the benefits of investment in better environmental management for the poor and for the economy overall; the costs incurred due to poor environmental management and resulting environmental degradation. It also covers the benefit-cost ratio for investments in environmental management or the return on investment, and the loss of revenue to the government.

All stakeholders working on mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages should rely on existing analytical work, such as environmental assessments and available facts, figures and studies. They should build on the knowledge of local and provincial stakeholders, nongovernmental actors and local communities.



**SESSION PLANS:**

**SESSION 2.1**  
**JUSTIFYING THE ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXTS**



**20 MINUTES**

**Activity 2.1.1**  
**Understanding the importance of assessing the local government contexts**

This activity will be an opportunity to present the justifications for the assessment of the local government’s contexts.

Method	Process	Time	Materials
Presentation	a) Use PowerPoint slides to make the presentation found in the Tools and Approaches at the end of this module. Familiarize yourself with the presentation and notes in advance of the session.	<b>15 mins</b>	Flipchart marker
Discussion	b) Inform the participants to refer to their Handbook to be able to catch on the discussion. Inform them that they need to accomplish the exercise that is provided for the session.  b) When the discussion of the topic is done, ask participants for some feedback or comments. Then proceed to Activity 2.2.1.		

**SESSION 2.2**  
**ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXTS**



**30 MINUTES**

**Activity 2.2.1**  
**Informational Analysis of the Contexts**

Use this activity as opportunity to conduct preliminary assessment based on analysis of existing information from sources such as planning and budgeting offices of the local government and other relevant agencies and organizations at the barangay/municipality. Because of some reasons (e.g., lack of comprehensive data), preliminary assessments can be done in order that the participants would be able to undertake the next Modules. It must be pointed out that in reality; assessments require careful and analytical discussion and interaction with a wide range of stakeholders. These include targeted discussions and workshops with government institutions and officials at various levels, non-governmental actors and the development agencies existing in the local government.

Method	Process	Time	Materials
Presentation	a) Before the small group workshops, present Figure 2.1 found on Tools and Approaches. Also, write the	<b>20 mins</b>	PowerPoint slides, laptop,

	<p>following terms on the flip chart and ask if the participants would be able to describe the differences and overlaps in them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Governmental</b></li> <li>- <b>Institutional</b></li> <li>- <b>Political</b></li> </ul> <p>b) Write their responses on the flipchart under the appropriate heading. Inform the participants that they can also write their answers to their handbook including those written on the flip chart to see the differences of responses among participants.</p> <p>c) Carefully describe and clarify the terms; after which proceed to present the remaining power point slides and some relevant points appended at the end of the module</p> <p>d) Ask participants if they have any questions and get their feedback and reactions to the presentation. Tell them to get ready for the workshop that will ensue to discuss the political, governmental and institutional conditions in their areas.</p>		<p>computer, multimedia</p> <p>projector and screen</p> <p>Handouts</p>
<p>Group Discussion</p>	<p>a) You will need to divide participants into small groups (members of the group should preferably come from the same municipality or local government unit)</p> <p>b) Distribute copies of the guidelines on the discussion of the conditions of their locality as appended in the Tools and Approaches section of this module. Tell that each group should select a facilitator and a recorder. They are to take note of the points raised and agreed upon.</p> <p>c) Give the groups 1 to 1.5 hrs for discussion.</p> <p>d) When groups are finished, they should prepare a draft copy of their assessment report for submission to the Facilitator</p> <p>f) Inform the groups that they should get ready for the next group activity (Activity 2.2.2).</p>	<p><b>1.5 hrs</b></p>	<p>Flip chart</p> <p>Handouts</p>

**Activity 2.2.2**

**Assessment of the socio-economic and environmental situation**

This activity is an opportunity for participants to assess their socio-economic and environmental contexts. It also will provide the chance to refine their knowledge and understanding of the challenges, issues and problems and risks in their respective local government unit. Feedback from the other groups can be

obtained that could help substantiate the data and information. Data and information obtained through various approaches can be used. Further, relevant data gathered through the **Community-Based Monitoring Systems (CBMS)** can form part of the assessment report.

Method	Process	Time	Materials
Group Discussion	<p>a) Hand out the guidance on what to discuss regarding the assessment of the socio-economic and environmental contexts of their locality, which is appended in the Tools and Approaches section of this module. Tell that each group should elect a leader and a secretary.</p> <p>b) Instruct groups that they are to brainstorm and discuss the questions for assessment of the contexts. They are to take note of the points raised and agreed upon.</p> <p>c) Inform participants that the activity will last for 1 to 1.5 hrs.</p> <p>d) When groups are finished, they should prepare a draft copy of their assessment report for submission to the Facilitator</p>	1.5 hrs	Handouts  Flip charts

**Activity 2.2.3**

**PLENARY SESSION (Optional Activity)**

This activity is optional depending on the availability of time. Basically, this activity will provide the participants to share their output to other groups. Feedback from the other groups can be obtained that could help substantiate the data and information.

Method	Process	Time	Materials
Presentation	<p>a) Inform the participants that each group is required to present their output for critiquing. A maximum of 20 minutes will be given to each group</p> <p>b) Remind each group not to present longer than the time allowed. The large group will get bored and might get disinterested in listening to the report.</p> <p>c) When each group has finished, ask the large group for clarifications or questions</p> <p>d) Summarize the session by highlighting the important points raised and remind the group that the next activity will make use of the results of the assessments.</p>	60 mins	Flip chart  Lap top

### SUMMARY POINTS

- ❖ Preliminary assessments are based on analysis of existing information from sources such as planning and budgeting guidelines, national and sector policies, strategies of development advocates and workers, and reform agendas. Gaps in information should be identified and noted.
- ❖ Preliminary assessments require interaction with a wide range of stakeholders, which includes targeted discussions and workshops with government institutions and officials at various levels, non-governmental actors and the development community.
- ❖ The collected information can take the form of a SWOT—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats—analysis, identifying and assessing the country’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to poverty-environment mainstreaming.
- ❖ The CBMS is a potent tool for data gathering. In the Philippines, it is adapted to local contexts and capacities, conducted by local researchers, and intended for local-level planners. As an easy-to-use and cost-effective tool for local government planning agencies, it is now being adopted, supported, and institutionalized within local governments throughout the Philippines as well as in other countries in Asia and Africa.
- ❖ The preliminary assessments that have been carried out are limited in scope, depth and time frame. This allowed the local government participants to achieve in the short term the objectives of finding the entry points and making the case. Later in the mainstreaming effort in their areas, the preliminary assessments will be complemented by extensive analytical work aimed at influencing the policy process at stake.



### TOOLS and APPROACHES:

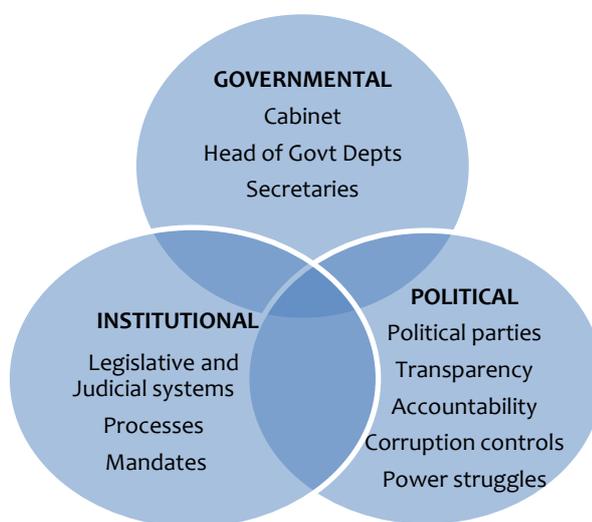


#### *Tool 1: Justification for Assessment of Contexts*

- Assessment of governmental, institutional and political contexts helps develop a thorough, shared understanding of the situation, which in turn provides the basis for finding the most effective entry points for mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages in local government development planning.
- It also enables local governments to identify potential partners and champions for poverty-environment mainstreaming.
- Without the understanding of the contexts, government key persons or offices leading a poverty-environment mainstreaming effort could seriously underestimate the local government’s readiness to engage in the process.



**Tool 2: Components on Governmental, Institutional and Political Contexts**



**Fig 2.1 Components in Governmental, Institutional and Political Context**



**Tool 3: Case Sample of Environmental Governance**

**CASE Example:**

**Attention to Environmental Governance in the United Republic of Tanzania**

Like many other developing countries rich in natural resources, the United Republic of Tanzania has faced environmental governance issues in regulating access to and use of these resources. For instance, a recent report estimated that only 4–15 per cent of public revenues due from logging operations districts in the south of the country were actually being collected. This report, together with newspaper headlines on illegal logging, has galvanized government and donor efforts to address the problem of uncollected forest revenues. The attention has also shed light on other areas of weak environmental governance, including lack of effective controls on destructive methods of fishing (e.g. dynamite fishing) and hunting.

Attention to these problem areas of environmental governance has allowed the United Republic of Tanzania to better mainstream poverty-environment linkages in its poverty reduction strategy and general budget support, for which sector-specific targets have been developed.

**Source:** UNDP-UNEP 2009



### Tool 4: HANDOUT/SLIDES (Guide Questions for the Assessments of the Contexts)

#### Processes

- What are the **possible entry points** to influence local government processes? How can these entry points be fully leveraged in trying to influence local government planning processes later in the poverty-environment mainstreaming effort?
- What are the **components** of the relevant local government planning processes?
- What are the **timetable and working arrangements** for revising or drafting the relevant development planning processes? When and how are objectives and priorities set or revised, policy measures developed, costing and budgeting accomplished and the monitoring framework developed?
- How are the local government planning processes **linked** to sectoral planning processes?

#### Institutions and Actors

- Which **government institutions** are leading the provincial or municipal local government and sector planning processes? How is their work organized?
- What are the mechanisms (e.g. working groups, consultations, development assistance coordination mechanisms) through which **other government institutions** participate? What about non-governmental actors? Is there a need to help mobilize other actors?
- How effective are the existing **mechanisms**? Is there a need to further develop or improve these?
- Does the **environment department** have a mandate to be involved in the development of policy with environmental implications initiated by other government institutions (e.g. the agriculture department)?
- Who are the potential **local government development partners**? How could they contribute to poverty-environment mainstreaming?

#### Governance

- What is the **governance and political situation** in the local government, and how might it affect the mainstreaming effort? Are there tensions or conflicts over natural resources? Is there freedom of the press? Do the poorest have a voice?
- Are the policy- and decision-making **processes effective and transparent**? Are there accountability mechanisms? What is the quality of the legislative and judicial systems? How is the rule of law enforced? How is corruption controlled?



### Tool 5: HANDOUT/SLIDES (Questions for Assessing Socio-Economic and Environmental Situation)

#### Livelihood and Health

- What is the size of the resident-**population depending for their livelihoods on natural resources and ecosystem services**? How many employment or informal income earning opportunities do natural resource sectors (e.g. forestry and fisheries) and other productive sectors relying on the environment (e.g. hydropower, agriculture and tourism) provide, particularly to the poorest?

- What are the **direct health and productivity impacts of air, soil and water pollution** and the associated costs of inaction? What needs to be done to reduce these costs? What would be the investments required to undertake action?

**Environmental Risks and Climate Change**

- Are the **local government’s population and economy vulnerable to environmental risks** such as floods, droughts and climate change? What are the effects and costs of environmental hazards (such as floods or pollution) in terms of health, livelihoods and vulnerability?
- How **vulnerable is the local government to the effects of climate change?** Do the local government and resident population have the capacity to adapt to environmental changes that could accompany climate change? What work (if any) has been done to assess potential impacts and adapt to climate change? Does the local government have a disaster risk reduction policy that incorporates climate change concerns?

**Economic Development**

- How much do the local government’s main **natural resource sectors contribute to growth?**
- How do natural resources contribute as inputs into other productive sectors? What percentage do these sectors represent in terms of gross domestic product? Does this take into account informal markets, and how large are these?
- Are local government’s growth and **poverty reduction targets at risk from the impacts of persistent and insidious environmental degradation?** This could include, for instance, the long-term decline of crop productivity from soil erosion.

**Overall Understanding of the Linkages**

- Is there an **explicit understanding of poverty-environment linkages** (such as in terms of food security or access to shelter and clean water) within the local government?
- How do various **demographic groups** (men and women, different age groups, different income-level groups) benefit from, or how are they affected by, these questions and linkages (in terms of their health, resilience, livelihoods, income opportunities, employment?)



**Tool 6: Sample Data Sets for Eco-Profiling**

1. Geo-physical environment	2. Biological environment	3. Socio-economic, Cultural and Political Environment
<b>A. Land Characteristics</b> - Geography - Geology and geomorphology - Topography, slope aspect and elevation - Soils - Drainage, tributary patterns and catchments areas	<b>A. Vegetation/flora</b> - Species composition - Species density - Distribution - Species diversity - Standing crop - Rate of biomass production - Ecological/species indicators	<b>A. Social</b> - Demography - Livelihood and income sources - Sectoral production - Power generation - Transportation and communication facilities - Health and education - Tourism and recreational

1. Geo-physical environment	2. Biological environment	3. Socio-economic, Cultural and Political Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Land classification and regulatory status</li> <li>- Land use and vegetative cover</li> <li>- Mineral resources and reserves</li> <li>- Natural disasters</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>facilities</li> <li>- Solid waste and sewerage systems</li> <li>- Wet market and slaughterhouse</li> <li>- Cooperatives and non-government organizations</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Water Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Location and extent/size of marine and coastal resources</li> <li>- General groundwater information</li> <li>- Water use and regulation</li> <li>- Surface water/stream conditions</li> <li>- Watershed importance</li> <li>- Prevailing tidal fluctuations</li> </ul>	<p><b>B. Fauna</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Species composition</li> <li>- Population densities and distribution</li> <li>- Species diversity</li> <li>- Biomass production/productivity</li> <li>- Ecological/species indicators</li> <li>- Commercially valued species</li> </ul>	<p><b>B. Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tribal/ethnic groups</li> <li>- Religious groups</li> <li>- Ancestral domain</li> <li>- History and archaeology</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Atmosphere</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General climatic type</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. Bacteria and fungi</b></p>	<p><b>C. Political</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political units</li> <li>- Citizen participation</li> <li>- Legal and institutional jurisdiction over natural resources</li> </ul>



**Tool 7: Example of Environmental Profile Report**

**Table of Contents**

- Preface
- Acknowledgements
- Table of Contents

**Executive Summary – English**

**Chapter 1. City/Municipality Introduction**

- Physical Features and Characteristics
- Main Features
- Population Characteristics
- Economic Structures and Activities
- Social Aspects
- Administrative Aspects

## Chapter 2. The Development Setting

- Manufacturing Industries
- Construction
- Energy
- Mining and Mineral Extraction
- Agricultural and Forestry
- Fisheries
- Transportation and Telecommunication
- Housing
- Tourism and Recreation
- Parks, Open Spaces and Natural Areas
- Education and Health
- Water Utilities (water supply, drainage, liquid waste)
- Solid Waste Management
- Informal Sector

## Chapter 3. The Environment Setting

### *Environment Resources*

#### Water

- Surface Water
- Ground Water and Aquifers
- Coastal Areas

#### Air

#### Land

- For Urban Construction
- For Agriculture
- Minerals, Aggregates and Related
- Forests and Natural Vegetation
- Wildlife Areas and Special Ecologies

#### Cultural and Historic Heritage

### *Environmental Hazards*

- Flooding
- Land slides, Subsidence
- Earthquakes
- Industrial Risks

## Chapter 4. The Management Setting

### Key Stakeholders

- Public Sector
- Community Sector
- Private Sector

### City / Municipality Management Structures and Functioning

- Organization and Structure, Over-all
- Information and Expertise
- Policy Formulation
- Policy Implementation

Strengthening City / Municipality and Environmental Management

**List of Abbreviations**

**Glossary of Terms**

**Bibliography**

**Contact Names and Addresses**

**Annexes:**

Annex A: Statistical Tables

Annex B: List of Major Industries

Annex C: Detailed Information on Water Supply System

Annex D: Organizational Charts, City / Municipal Government

Annex E: Supplementary Maps