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Towards Decent Work & Economic Growth: The Case of the Hope Project by NKGIT And BJMP In Alignment with SDG 8

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ABSTRACT

Rehabilitation programs have increasingly focused on empowering Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) by equipping them with skills for sustainable livelihoods. This qualitative study explored the implementation of the Hope Project, a collaborative initiative between the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGIT) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in General Trias City, Philippines. Data from interviews with key stakeholders were analyzed thematically. The analysis revealed that the Hope Project provided PDLs with a sense of hope and empowerment, facilitated financial stability, and fostered community reintegration. However, the project faced challenges such as resource limitations, marketing difficulties, and societal stigma. The findings suggest that by addressing these challenges and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, rehabilitation programs can effectively empower PDLs and contribute to community development.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

A livelihood consists of the capabilities, assets (both material and social resources), and activities necessary for making a living. It is considered sustainable when it can withstand and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets over time, and avoid degrading the natural resource base (Chambers & Conway, 1991). Livelihood programs are implemented globally by governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders worldwide to support vulnerable populations in generating sustainable income and improving their quality of life. These programs typically include a variety of interventions, including skills training, access to credit, business development support, and market linkages.

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) is a community-based initiative that aims to enhance the socio-economic status of participants through capacity building (World Bank, 2018). Its primary goal is to reduce poverty and inequality by creating job opportunities for impoverished families and transitioning highly vulnerable households into sustainable livelihoods, thus leading them towards economic stability (World Bank, 2018). This program acknowledges the significance of enabling resource-poor individuals to access resources and rights, mitigating risks, and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. It also emphasizes the importance of equitable access to assets, livelihood opportunities, strategies, and participation in decision-making processes. The SLP provides livelihood support to economically disadvantaged households, predominantly those under the Pantawid Program.

This support is provided through micro-enterprise development (MD) and employment facilitation (EF) initiatives. (Ballesteros, Orbeta, Corpus & Ancheta, 2017).

The implementation of livelihood programs continues to serve as a pivotal endeavor in the pursuit of socio-economic advancement. Within this context, the HOPE Project Livelihood Program jointly administered by Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng

General Trias (NKG) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) emerges as a significant initiative as to equip incarcerated men and women with the skills and resources needed to secure a sustainable livelihood. This study examines the management of the HOPE project livelihood programs inside the penal institution.

The General Trias City Jail, under the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), partnered with Nagkakaisang Kababaihan and Rotary Club of Tagaytay to introduce "The HOPE Project" at Robinsons Place General Trias. This initiative, launched on Friday, July 15, 2022, at the mall's activity center in Barangay Tejero, General Trias City, showcased artworks created by inmates. With a theme of "Changing Lives, Building a Safer Nation," the project aimed to provide financial assistance to persons deprived of liberty (PDL) and support them during their incarceration (Abrina, 2022).

The HOPE Project Livelihood Program aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (United Nations, 2015). SDG 8 underscores the need for inclusive labor markets that offer opportunities to individuals in vulnerable situations; by equipping them with vocational skills and resources, The HOPE Project supports their potential for economic independence and social reintegration post-incarceration, contributing to economic stability and community safety. This initiative not only helps reduce inequalities but also supports the broader objectives of sustainable development by enabling marginalized individuals to become productive members of society. Thus, the program underscores the critical role of inclusive labor markets in achieving the targets of SDG 8, highlighting the transformative potential of livelihood programs in correctional settings (United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

To assess the effectiveness of livelihood programs in correctional environments, it is important to recognize the constraints and needs in these settings that differ significantly from those in open communities. Previous studies have shown that while these programs aim to improve skills and provide employment opportunities, the unique environment of jails pose specific challenges, such as limited resources and the need for specialized training to meet the rehabilitative goals of correctional institutions (Bocar, Yadao, Baquilod, Cafe, & Gesite, 2018). These findings indicate the need for tailored approaches that address the distinct needs of incarcerated individuals.

Statement of the Problem

This study intends to analyze the implementation of the Hope Project Livelihood Program, as a collaborative effort between Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKG) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). The program endeavors to empower men and women in their transition back into society by providing them with the necessary resources and skills to establish sustainable livelihoods.

Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do NKG and BJMP implement The HOPE Project in accordance with SDG 8?
2. What challenges are faced during the implementation of The HOPE Project?
3. What initiatives are undertaken by NKG and BJMP to sustain The HOPE project in the long term?

Theoretical Framework

The sustainable livelihoods approach represented a mindset regarding the aims, extent, and focal points of development. It originated from ongoing reflections on the lifestyles of impoverished and vulnerable populations, emphasizing the significance of policies and institutions in their livelihoods. (Serrat, 2008).

The theoretical framework for this study utilized the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of the "The HOPE Project" within the General Trias City Jail community and NKG. The SLF offered a comprehensive perspective on livelihoods, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of sustainable strategies for livelihood enhancement.

Within the SLF, livelihoods are viewed as dynamic and influenced by various factors, including assets, institutions, and external influences. By adopting the SLF, this study aimed to examine how "The HOPE Project" is expected to contribute to sustainable livelihood opportunities for persons deprived of liberty (PDL) within the jail community.

Integrating the SLF into the theoretical framework facilitated a nuanced analysis of the anticipated interplay between "The HOPE Project" and the projected livelihood outcomes of the PDLs. By considering the projected complex interactions between various livelihood components and the unique context of the jail community, this study aims to assess the anticipated effectiveness of the program in promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities and enhancing the well-being of participants.

Through this theoretical lens, the study seeks to contribute valuable insights into the anticipated effectiveness of collaborative interventions within carceral settings, thereby informing future initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable livelihoods and community development among incarcerated individuals. (Karki, 2001).

Conceptual Framework

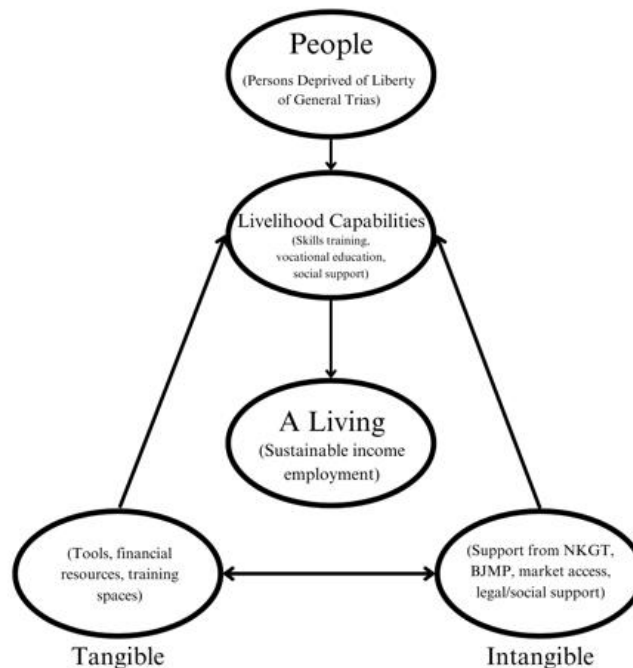


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of The HOPE Project based on the Chambers and Conway model*

The HOPE Project Livelihood Program, which was adapted from the Chambers and Conway model, weaves together key components to empower incarcerated men and women in General Trias. Through a holistic approach, the program will enhance their livelihood capabilities, which are essential for fostering sustainable livelihoods both within and beyond the confines of incarceration. Central to this framework are the Livelihood Capabilities, representing a nexus of skills, knowledge, and psychological support provided to the people. Through comprehensive training programs, vocational education, and crucial psychological and social support mechanisms, the individuals will be equipped with the tools necessary to navigate their journey towards rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

The framework extends beyond mere theoretical constructs to tangible outcomes, exemplified by "A Living" - the fruition of enhanced capabilities resulting in sustainable income generation and post-incarceration employment opportunities. Supported by tangible assets such as tools, financial resources, and physical spaces, and nurtured by intangible assets like organizational support, market access, and legal assistance, the individuals will be empowered to chart a path towards self-sufficiency and societal reintegration. The interconnectedness within the framework underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach, where tangible and intangible assets synergize to catalyse positive transformation and pave the way for a brighter future for incarcerated individuals in General Trias.

Significance of Study

This study aims to benefit the following:

Communities. This study will help to evaluate the substantial impact of Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) on improving the livelihood, initiatives and programs of its members.

Livelihood Programs. This research will contribute valuable knowledge that can inform the development and enhancement of similar initiatives aimed at promoting economic empowerment and social reintegration. It will be the resource data to offer insights into effective strategies for supporting marginalized populations, particularly incarcerated individuals.

Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGT). This research will serve a purpose for women's groups to widen their programs and activity as an inclusive community.

People Deprived of Liberty. The study will illuminate how these programs contribute to the rehabilitation and empowerment of men and women behind bars. Understanding the challenges and successes of such initiatives is crucial for addressing the unique circumstances faced by incarcerated men and women to promote their successful reintegration into society upon release. This research will serve as a valuable resource for designing more effective and gender-responsive interventions aimed at improving the lives of incarcerated men and women and reducing the cycle of incarceration.

Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). This research will serve as a possible basis to evaluate the efficacy of The HOPE Project in facilitating the reintegration of incarcerated men and women back into society. By assessing the program's implementation and outcomes, BJMP will be able to refine its strategies, enhance support services, and better address the socio-

economic needs of inmates and will contribute to their successful rehabilitation and reducing recidivism rates.

Local Government Unit (LGU). This research will shed light on the effectiveness and impact of the Hope Project Livelihood Program, particularly within the context of local governance. By evaluating the program's implementation, this research will provide valuable insights that can inform policy-making and resource allocation decisions by Local Government Units (LGUs), it will also contribute to more targeted and effective support for marginalized populations, such as incarcerated men and women

Non-Government Organization (NGO). NGOs engaged in community development, rehabilitation, and advocacy efforts will find value in the research findings. This study will offer them actionable insights for collaborating with government agencies, leveraging resources, and implementing complementary initiatives to support the successful reintegration of individuals affected by the criminal justice system.

Foreign Service Program. This study lies in its potential to inform students who are taking Foreign Service Program about the effective reintegration strategies for individuals affected by the criminal justice system and contributing to global efforts in promoting rehabilitation and social reintegration. Understanding the intricacies of programs like the Hope Project Livelihood Program will equip students with practical knowledge that can inform their future roles in diplomatic efforts aimed at promoting rehabilitation and social inclusion globally. The study will bridge foreign service education with the goals of international organizations—fostering cooperation, peace, and security—preparing students to advocate for initiatives that contribute to global social and economic resilience.

Future Researchers. This study will provide a significant opportunity to explore the effectiveness of programs within the foreign service context, specifically focusing on the Hope Project Livelihood Program. For Future Researchers this study will serve as a resource or reference for conducting further research on Livelihood Programs targeted at incarcerated men and women.

Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on analyzing the implementation of the Hope Project Livelihood Program, a collaborative initiative between the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGK) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) within General Trias City. While the Hope Project has broader national goals, this study is limited to its implementation within this specific locality. The research will involve program stakeholders or actors directly involved in its implementation, including NKGK members, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) personnel, and program beneficiaries.

This focus will ensure a deep dive into the program's local execution but may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or similar programs. This research also considers its alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which focuses on promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. The study highlights how the HOPE Project contributed to SDG 8 through its efforts to empower Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with vocational skills and opportunities for meaningful economic participation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Bureau of Jail Management & Penology (BJMP) - is a jail facility agent under Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) that functions jail supervision and oversees jail operation

Community - is the community of General Trias, Cavite where the study took place.

HOPE Project - is the project collaboration of NKGK (Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias Cavite) and BJMP (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology) for PDL (Persons Deprived of liberty) in Cavite.

Local Government Unit (LGU) - A Local Government Unit (LGU) is a political subdivision of the Philippines created under the Local Government Code of 1991, tasked with the responsibility of providing basic services to the people and ensuring their welfare. (DILG, 2021).

Municipality - a local administrative division that manages and provides public services for a specific geographical area. This can include tasks such as maintaining infrastructure, public safety, and offering social services (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2021).

Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias Cavite (NKGK) - is a non-government organization partnered with the Local government in Cavite.

Non-government Organization (NGO) - a voluntary, not-for-profit, non-governmental organization that operates independently from the state and seeks to address specific social, economic, environmental, or humanitarian issues. (Lasco R.J. 2019)

Organization - is the organization of the Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias Cavite.

Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) - are the participants in the NKGK (Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias Cavite) and BJMP (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology) sustainable livelihood program entitled Hope Project.

Poverty - condition where an individual, group, or nation lacks the financial resources or means to fulfill their basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. World Bank. (2019).

Sustainable Livelihood program - initiatives and projects aimed at improving the economic, social, and environmental well-being of marginalized communities and individuals. These programs focus on providing sustainable income-generating opportunities, enhancing skills, and promoting community development. The primary goal is to empower people to become self-reliant and break the cycle of poverty. (World Bank, 2018).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researchers embark on a formal exploration of related literature, meticulously examining previous studies pertinent to the subject matter. This critical evaluation will serve as the foundation upon which the study is built, much like the essential groundwork preceding the construction of a strong structure. Through this process, the researchers aim to refine key insights from existing knowledge, providing a concise yet thorough understanding of the current state of the field.

NGO Partnership to Local Government

The number of registered NGOs increased after the Marcos regime fell in 1986 because the government tolerated them. These included organizations founded by politicians, local government officials, and members of the armed forces to keep control over resource distribution and suppress popular institutional initiatives that challenged the status quo. (Clarke, 1995) The collaboration between Local Government Units (LGUs) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Philippines, as outlined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution and the 1991 Local Government Code, aims to analyze the most efficient interaction between these entities. (Orbista, 2012). Governmental Organizations (GOs) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) enhance democratic governance focusing on local government institutions in general (Hossain & Mojumder, 2018).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have rights embodied in Article 2, Section 23 of the Philippine Constitution of 1987 that states that NGOs are private, nonprofit, voluntary organizations that the state must support because, under responsible leadership, they can contribute to social, political, and economic growth. The 1991 Municipal Government Code upholds NGOs' rights to participate in local administration at the municipal level. The government made an effort to start programs that were supported by leaders and community-based organizations in order to help the lowest members of society (Narayan & Petesch, 2002). The establishment of embedded partnerships necessitates a level of commitment from NGO leadership that is often lacking, particularly in NGOs funded by donors. To enhance strategic planning, it is crucial to discern the advantages and drawbacks of routine co-production arrangements compared to those inherent in embedded partnerships.

The community's successful participation can lead to a high standard of good governance. Collaborations between Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local governments play a vital role in optimizing good governance at the community level (Rahman & Tasnim, 2023). Decentralization is a part of the good governance concept, which was developed to solve the issue of the Philippines' lack of sustainable economic growth. However, aspects such as voter engagement, election processes, public awareness, dispute resolution, local tax collection, and budget formulation suggest that further collaboration between NGOs and local governments is necessary to enhance participation in governance processes (Rahman & Tasnim, 2023).

An example of a partnership between an NGO and a local government unit is the collaboration between the municipality of Carmona and the Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng Carmona Inc. (SNKCI) in managing the Central Materials Recovery Facility (CMRF) in Carmona, Cavite. SNKCI, a non-governmental organization, focuses on empowering women, offering community-based employment opportunities, and teaching effective financial management skills (Garcia, Grande, Juan, Juanani, & Sisante, 2019). Another instance of NGO-LGU collaboration is Project HOPE, a significant community outreach initiative by Far Eastern University (FEU), aimed at enhancing the overall well-being, alleviating challenges, and improving the socio-economic conditions of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL). FEU's Community Extension Services features Project HOPE (Harnessing Offenders' Personal Empowerment), a flagship program addressing the needs of incarcerated women at the Manila City Jail, Sta. Cruz. This initiative demonstrates the university's dedication to inclusive community development. The FEU Institute of Education has implemented a reading skills program for 10 selected Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) in Manila City Jail-Female Dormitory, aligning with a study that highlights the significance of addressing educational needs for PDLs (Alvares & Contreras, 2020).

Within the framework of both the Millennium Development Goals and, more recently, the Sustainable Development Goals, the aspiration for partnerships in development, particularly between the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), remains a highly regarded objective. These partnerships are believed to enhance the delivery of essential social services to underserved populations, with the state contributing scale and NGOs ensuring effective governance (Hossain & Mojumder, 2018), illustrates that state-NGO partnerships can, indeed, enhance service provision. However, it is observed that only a limited number of these collaborations have the potential to evolve into integrated partnerships capable of instigating enduring positive changes in governmental working practices (Hossain & Mojumder, 2018).

Women Livelihood

Women make significant contributions to the general well-being in rural areas of several developing nations in Southeast Asia, like India. In these locations, women play an important role in ensuring their households' livelihoods. They frequently balance several obligations and use a variety of techniques to assist their family (Namiech, 2020). As agricultural laborers and entrepreneurs, they devote their time, money, and decision-making skills to ensuring the food and nutritional security of their families and communities. They also ensure that food supply remains stable during economic downturns (Das & Singh 2020).

Faced with shifting crises and growing global problems, women bear an unfair proportion of the economic and social burdens of these repeating challenges (Namiech, 2020). Recognizing the severity of the situation, finding effective, sustainable, and economical approaches to empower women in negotiating risks and vulnerabilities is critical. This needs an emphasis on protecting the rights of individuals, respect, and livelihoods while also promoting their general well-being (Namiech, 2020).

In armed conflicts, women often experience significant shifts in their roles and responsibilities as they break traditional gender

norms. When men are absent or incapacitated, women must assume their economic roles, leading to a complex impact on their lives, marked by both empowerment and new insecurities (Arostegui, 2013; Shekhawat, 2015). Studies from Nepal's Maoist conflict demonstrate how women ex-combatants and non-combatants faced varying changes in gender roles and livelihoods (El-Bushra, 2003; Denov & Ricard-Guay, 2013).

Although women experience more challenges due to numerous crises and inequality in these difficult situations, they also have a tremendous deal of ability to lead constructive change (Namiach, 2020). Because of their vital roles in families and communities, they are in a unique position to develop community and individual resilience as well as to put policies into place that support their livelihoods, well-being, and even systemic changes in the face of hardship (Namiach, 2020).

Post-conflict programs have not always addressed these disparities, emphasizing the need for a more nuanced understanding of women's experiences and addressing issues of caste and ethnicity alongside gender (Grabska, 2013; Buvinic et al., 2012; Arostegui, 2013). By acknowledging and addressing these intersecting factors, more effective and inclusive post-conflict programs can be developed to support women's well-being and empowerment, ensuring a more equitable recovery process.

NGO Collaboration in Jail Facilities

Imprisonment within correctional facilities serves as a means to penalize individuals who break the law. A fundamental aspect of this confinement is to aid in the rehabilitation and successful return of inmates into society. However, it is ironic that Cameroonian prisons often neglect this crucial aspect of imprisonment, failing to prioritize the rehabilitation and reintegration of detainees (Wakai, 2024). Volunteers and NGO personnel contribute an essential supplementary factor that, in effective rehabilitative prison setups, supplements and strengthens the efforts of professional staff. Conversely, in prisons suffering from overcrowding, mismanagement, and inadequate resources, their presence can improve conditions sufficiently to enable some authentic rehabilitative efforts to still take place (Sinclair, 2017).

It introduces the idea of 'prisoner integration' to demonstrate how NGOs, assigned with reentry responsibilities under devolution policies, integrate former prisoners into society as citizens (Kaufman, 2015). Rehabilitation, resocialization and readjustment of the juvenile prisoners have been given due attention by modern society and different social development organizations in developed societies. (Scott & Gerbasi, 2005). Healthcare professionals who are part of national professional associations possess the ability to champion the enhancement of the health status of this susceptible demographic, particularly through collaborative efforts in this area.

The teenagers and youngsters in the prisons are probably some of the most underprivileged members of modern society (Coker, 2020). After rejoining society, many of them turn back to crime as a means of livelihood due to their low educational background, lack of job skills, criminal record, and no provisional services (Klein, Tolbert, Bugarin, Cataldi, & Tauschek, 2004). According to Jilani (2003), extreme overcrowding, malnutrition, physical and mental abuse, legal advice, and lack of medical care are the issues of prisons. Due to the way juvenile prisoners are perceived, society does not care about what happens behind their walls and prisoners and their administrators receive less consideration in comparison with hospitals and schools (Bobbio et al., 2020).

Education is one of the ways to reduce recidivism. Education plays a major role in checking kids from showing improper behavior. Students provided with effective educational support of academics, personal or social behaviors and career education have a lesser chance of going to prison on becoming adults (Deming, 2011; Engstrom & Scott, 2020; Osgood et al., 2010). Schools can create an environment that may help in reducing the risk of landing in prison (Deming, 2011). About a million people are being incarcerated around the world. Ninety percent are released sooner or later and there is a need for prisoners to be provided with services, especially education and vocational training that enable them to rejoin society smoothly.

The Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also referred to as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, safeguard the planet, and ensure that all people live in peace and prosperity by 2030. These 17 goals recognize that progress in one area influences outcomes in others, emphasizing the need for an integrated approach that balances social, economic, and environmental sustainability (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.).

At the core of the SDGs is the commitment to leave no one behind, prioritizing progress for those furthest from achieving sustainable development. These goals target critical issues such as ending poverty and hunger, combating AIDS, and eradicating discrimination against women and girls. Achieving these ambitious goals requires the collective creativity, expertise, technology, and financial resources of governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals worldwide (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.).

The 17 SDGs are as follows:

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well-Being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality

6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals

The SDGs are a bold blueprint for global development, representing a shared vision of a sustainable future that benefits both present and future generations. Collaboration across sectors and borders is essential to fulfill this transformative agenda.

Sustainable Livelihood Alignment with SDG 8

Sustainable livelihood programs in the Philippines play a pivotal role in addressing the objectives of SDG 8, which focuses on promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (United Nations, 2015). These programs, often spearheaded by government agencies, NGOs, and private sector collaborations, are designed to uplift marginalized communities by providing them with the necessary tools and opportunities for economic empowerment. Through skills training, financial assistance, and market access initiatives, these programs not only enhance the immediate economic well-being of participants but also contribute to long-term economic stability and resilience.

For instance, initiatives like the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), KALAHI-CIDSS, and the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP) demonstrate the diverse range of livelihood interventions aimed at addressing poverty and promoting sustainable development in the country. These programs focus on equipping beneficiaries with skills and resources necessary for entrepreneurship and employment, thereby aligning with the principles of SDG 8. By fostering inclusive economic growth and providing opportunities for decent work, these initiatives contribute to the overall socio-economic development of the Philippines, creating pathways for a more prosperous and equitable society.

This aligns with SDG 8 targets of sustaining per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries (Target 8.1), as well as achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation (Target 8.2), and achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities (Target 8.5) (United Nations, 2015). Furthermore, these programs aim to protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers (Target 8.8) (United Nations, 2015). The targets also include promoting policies to support job creation and growing enterprises (Target 8.3), improving resource efficiency in consumption and production (Target 8.4), promoting youth employment, education and training (Target 8.6), and ending modern slavery, trafficking and child labor (Target 8.7). Additionally, SDG 8 aims to promote beneficial and sustainable tourism (Target 8.9), ensure universal access to banking, insurance and financial services (Target 8.a), increase aid for trade support (Target 8.b), and develop a global youth employment strategy (Target 8.c) (United Nations, 2015).

Synthesis

Post-Marcos regime, NGOs proliferated in the Philippines, including those tied to politicians and the armed forces, impacting resource distribution (Clarke, 1995). The 1987 Constitution and 1991 Local Government Code formalized NGO-LGU collaboration. NGOs, recognized in the constitution, contribute to social, political, and economic growth (Orbista, 2012). However, commitment gaps in embedded partnerships hinder strategic planning. Collaboration enhances good governance, but gaps persist in voter engagement, dispute resolution, and budget formulation (Rahman & Tasnim, 2023).

In Southeast Asia, women play vital roles in rural livelihoods, facing disproportionate burdens during crises (Namiech, 2020). Empowering women requires sustainable approaches safeguarding rights, livelihoods, and well-being (Namiech, 2020). Women's roles shift during armed conflicts, presenting challenges and opportunities for empowerment (Arostegui, 2013; Shekhawat, 2015). Post-conflict programs often overlook intersecting factors like caste and ethnicity, hindering inclusive recovery (Grabska, 2013; Buvinic et al., 2012).

Cameroonian prisons often failed to prioritize rehabilitation (Wakai, 2024). NGOs supplement professional staff efforts, especially in overcrowded facilities (Sinclair, 2017). 'Prisoner integration' initiatives aim to reintegrate former inmates into society (Kaufman, 2015). Rehabilitation, education, and vocational training are crucial to reduce recidivism and facilitate smooth reentry into society (Scott & Gerbasi, 2005).

Despite the recognized importance of NGO-LGU collaborations, there remains a gap in understanding the depth of commitment

necessary for embedded partnerships, hindering effective strategic planning and governance. Additionally, post-conflict programs often overlook intersecting factors like caste, ethnicity, and gender, limiting their inclusivity and effectiveness in supporting women's well-being and empowerment (Grabska, 2013; Buvinic et al., 2012).

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serves as a universal framework for addressing global challenges, including poverty, inequality, and climate change, with a strong emphasis on sustainability and inclusivity. Adopted in 2015, the 17 interconnected goals aim to foster peace, prosperity, and well-being by 2030. Sustainable livelihood programs in the Philippines, driven by government agencies, NGOs, and private sector collaborations, are essential for achieving the objectives of SDG 8, focusing on sustained economic growth, full employment, and decent work for all (United Nations, 2015). These initiatives, exemplified by programs like the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), KALAHI-CIDSS, and the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP), aims to uplift marginalized communities by providing skills training, financial support, and market access. By fostering inclusive economic growth and enhancing opportunities for decent work, these programs contribute to the socio-economic development of the Philippines, aligning with SDG 8 and creating pathways for a more prosperous and equitable society.

This study seeks to address these gaps by analyzing the implementation of a livelihood program in collaboration with an NGO and a government institution. By examining the effectiveness of this partnership in empowering marginalized women and facilitating prisoner reintegration, This study aims to provide insights into enhancing commitment levels in NGO-LGU collaborations and developing more inclusive post-conflict programs. Through this analysis, this study contributes to the broader literature on NGO-Government partnerships and women's empowerment in post-conflict settings, offering practical implications for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology, including its design, location, data sources, sampling method, data collection process, research tools, and data analysis. The researchers outline the procedures to be employed to analyze how the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGT) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) implemented the HOPE Project.

Research Design

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the implementation of the HOPE Project in enhancing the socio-economic conditions of the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGT) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). The study aims to identify the key factors contributing to the program's success and suggest improvements for future implementation. A case study will be involved with an in-depth exploration of a single person, group, or event. This method entails a thorough analysis of various aspects of the subject's life and history to identify patterns and underlying causes of behavior (Cherry, 2024). The purpose of the case study is to provide a detailed examination of the collaboration between the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGT) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), focusing on the person, group, place, event, organization, and phenomenon.

The research will employ a qualitative approach. This method will be employed to analyze the open-ended questions from the questionnaires and one-on-one interviews. During the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the official heads of NKGT and BJMP, as well as current and former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). Through these interviews, rich insights will be gained regarding the experiences, perceptions, challenges, and recommendations regarding livelihood programs. Participants might express appreciation for the opportunity to learn new skills and earn income while incarcerated, noting the positive impact on their self-confidence and hope for the future. The integration of qualitative data will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the livelihood program's implementation within NKGT and BJMP.

Research Locale



Figure 2. Map of General Trias City, Cavite.

The study will be conducted in the city of General Trias, a first-class component city in Cavite, Philippines, with a growing population and diverse demographic profile (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2021). This location is considered ideal for studying criminal justice issues and exploring the impact of incarceration on individuals and communities.

The General Trias City Jail is a relevant locale for the study as it serves as a critical institution in the criminal justice system. Studying the operations and conditions within the BJMP will provide valuable insights into the challenges and issues faced by inmates, as well as the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and strategies.

Participants of the Study

The researchers will conduct interviews with the president of NKGIT and the former warden BJMP who is now the CEO of The HOPE Project, as well as selected PDLs inside the City Jail, who were beneficiaries of the project. Seven PDLs will be selected—four females and three males and a former male PDL.

Sources of Data

This research will draw upon both primary and secondary sources of data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the HOPE Project. Primary data will be collected through interviews with key individuals, including the former warden of BJMP General Trias, the President of NKGIT, and the Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). These interviews will offer first-hand insights into the project's implementation and impact.

To complement these primary sources, the researchers will also analyze secondary data, including relevant publications, journals, and related studies. This analysis will provide a broader context for the project, allowing for comparisons with existing research. Additionally, social media interviews related to the project will be examined to gauge public perception and identify emerging themes. By utilizing both primary and secondary sources, this research aims to offer a well-rounded and insightful analysis of the HOPE Project.

Research Instrument

To assess the effectiveness of the HOPE Project, the researchers will conduct interviews with both the staff implementing the project and the participants involved in it. These interviews will be conducted in both English and Taglish to ensure that all respondents feel comfortable and fully understand the questions. The interview questions are designed to encourage open and honest responses. Staff members will be asked about the project's objectives, the strategies being used, and the challenges they encounter. They will also be encouraged to share insights on how the project contributes to economic growth and the promotion of decent work. Participants, on the other hand, will be invited to share their experiences, the skills they have gained, and the ways in which the project has impacted their lives. They will discuss how the project helps them secure employment and reintegrate into their communities. The interview questions are carefully reviewed by experts to ensure clarity and relevance. They are crafted to create a conversational atmosphere, encouraging all participants to express their genuine thoughts and feelings about the project. Sample questions such as *"What challenges do you encounter during the implementation of the HOPE Project, and how do you address them?"*, *"What initiatives have NKGIT and BJMP undertaken to ensure the long-term sustainability of the HOPE Project?"*, and *"How do you benefit from the goals and objectives of the HOPE Project?"* will be reviewed and validated prior to implementation to ensure they are appropriate and effective for the study's objectives.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before commencing data collection, the researchers sought approval from their research adviser. After the study was validated, a formal letter detailing the study's objectives was submitted to the necessary authorities to request permission to conduct interviews with the president of the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGIT) and the former warden of BJMP. Upon receiving approval from the respective parties including the research adviser, the president of the NKGIT organization, the former jail warden of BJMP General Trias, and former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) the researchers proceeded with their interviews as scheduled, based on the availability of the participants.

In the process of data collection, the researchers strictly adhered to ethical guidelines by using an informed consent form with each respondent. This document outlined the purpose of the study, the nature of the interviews, and the measures in place to ensure confidentiality and data privacy. All participants were fully informed and provided their voluntary consent before taking part in the research.

Data Analysis

The researchers performed data analysis by conducting thematic analysis on the transcribed interviews, aimed at identifying recurring patterns, themes, and concepts within the data. This method facilitated comprehension of the perspectives, experiences, and opinions expressed by the interviewees concerning the HOPE Project and related subjects. Additionally, a comprehensive interpretation of the gathered information was conducted, aligning the findings with the research objectives and theoretical frameworks. This involved providing explanations, implications, and recommendations based on the analyzed data. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, and the

respectful treatment of all participants, with particular attention to protecting the privacy and anonymity of interviewees and handling sensitive information with care.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings from interviews with Hope Project participants. Thematic analysis revealed recurring themes organized around the three primary statements of the problem: the importance of the Hope project, challenges and solutions in implementation, and contributions to economic growth and decent work. This chapter also discusses the Hope Project in further detail.

The data gathered for analysis include twelve interviews. Two interviews were conducted directly by the researchers with Ms. Aisha Fe S. Columna (Transcript 1), the NKGIT President, and Mr. Aris Williamere Villaester (Transcript 2), the CEO of the HOPE Project and former warden of General Trias City Jail, who is now stationed at Lipa City Jail in Batangas. Two other interviews were transcribed by the researchers from Facebook videos of the radio segment *Teleradyo Serbisyo, Ang Tinig N'yo*, hosted by Karla Estrada on DWPM Radyo 630 by ABS-CBN. The third transcript features a testimony from a former PDL named Lowie Delgado (Transcript 3), while the fourth transcript provides additional insights on the HOPE Project by Mr. Villaester (Transcript 4). The fifth transcript is from an interview with a former PDL (Transcript 5) who is currently a student and employed under Mr. Villaester. The remaining transcripts (Transcript 6-12) are from current PDLs who are incarcerated at the General Trias City Jail and were interviewed by the researchers.

The HOPE Project

The Hope Project: Help One PDL Everyday (H.O.P.E.) is a transformative rehabilitation initiative operating at General Trias City Jail and Lipa City Jail, conceptualized by its CEO and visionary, Aris Williamere Villaester. This project empowers Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with essential skills, financial opportunities, and community connections to support their reintegration into society. Spearheaded by Villaester alongside the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias, led by Anne Ferrer, Aisha Columna, and supported by Congressman Ony Ferrer and the Rotary Club of Tagaytay City, the Hope Project is a groundbreaking approach within the Philippine correctional system.

The project's mission, embodied in its name "Help One PDL Everyday" offers PDLs a path to self-reliance and purpose through training in artisanal skills, such as painting, woodworking, and metalwork. Their creations are showcased in trade fairs and exhibits, with proceeds supporting their eventual release and reintegration. The Hope Project also provides counseling, mentorship, and opportunities for community engagement, fostering a supportive environment and reducing recidivism.

Recently highlighted by Villaester at the ICPA 2024 conference in Singapore, the Hope Project calls for international collaboration, aiming to expand this impactful model globally. By addressing the complex challenges PDLs face—stigma, unemployment, and mental health struggles—the initiative embodies hope, rehabilitation, and a commitment to building a more compassionate society for all.

Implementation of the HOPE Project

Table 1. Themes, subthemes and transcript basis with regards to the implementation of the Project that aligns to SDG 8.

| Theme (SDG 8 Target) | Sub-theme | Transcript |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Target 8.1: Sustainable economic growth | Economic Empowerment | "So at least, doon sa loob pa lang, natuturuan sila to do other skills para ma-improve yung kanila kung saan sila magaling para paglabas nila, tutuloy na lang nila. So hindi rin mahirap sa kanila humanap ng trabaho. So that's the importance of the HOPE Project." (<i>Transcript 1, Lines 73-76</i>) |

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| | Financial Stability | <p>"So in this way, para kahit papano their earnings, kahit nga kulong (sic) sila, all their profits will go to those people na nasa labas na naghihintay for them outside." (Transcription 1, Lines 26-27)</p> <p>"Tinutulungan niya ako sa mga... Ano ko yung bayarin ko sa school." (Transcription 5, Lines 897-898)</p> <p>"Pag tulad po namin, nabebenta po kami ng mga ginagawa po namin. Ano naman po kami ng pampinansyal sir. Ibigay naman naman po kami." (Transcription 7, Lines 1067-1068)</p> <p>"Maganda rin sir.Kahit pa pano, kung nagkakaroon mo kami ng pera, magkaroon man ako ng pera,binibigay ko sa anak ko. Pinapadala ko lang kasi minsan lang ako dalawin ang anak ko. Anak ko, isa lang. Ano lang siya. 11 years old. Pinapasuyo ko na lang sa mga kaibigan dyan, mga personnel. Pinag-GGcash ko na lang. three-ha-300, mga ipong-ipong ko ba na, ipapadala ko sa anak ko." (Transcription 8, Lines 1155-1159)</p> <p>"Ah, malaking bagay rin po kasi sakin yun lalo na po ako, wala po akong dalaw. Doon din po ako kumukuha ng panggastos sa araw." (Transcription 10, Lines 1280-1281)</p> |
| Target 8.2: Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation | Change to Innovation thru Skill Enhancement | <p>"Kaya may iba't ibang jail magaling sila puro painting, yung iba naman furniture...So doon ako magbebase ngayon. Marami ano dito ah painting or tattoo artists, automatic painters ko iyon...And para maimprove pa iyon, ang ginagawa namin siyempre nag tri-party agreement kami, Rotary Club of Tagaytay City, and other organizations tulad ng UST Fine Arts para mas mahasa pa iyon.." (Transcription 3, Lines 343-350)</p> <p>"Dito, natuto na nako magwelding. Isang napaka malaking kanasan ko yan dito sa pang-welding siya. Natuto mag-welding." (Transcript 8, Lines 1151-1152)</p> |
| | | <p>"Natutunan ko po kung paano gumawa ng bayong kasi na sa bayong po ako. Yun, naging masipag, tiis lang para kumita." (Transcript 12, Lines 1374-1475)</p> |
| | Product Diversification | <p>"They need to think occasionally about what's new, because clients are also looking for something different, right? Before, the bag was just a strap, now there's wood involved, they have wraps, they are even embroidering, painting on the bayong now." (Transcript 1, Lines 103-105)</p> |
| Target 8.3: Promote policies to support job creation and growing enterprises | Entrepreneurial Skills | <p>"In terms of the work situation, they are given a certain area there where they can work during their free time. It's like they have their own little workshop, right? So, there are some PDLs there that have their spot where they can engage in these activities. And if you see our jail, it's really beautiful. It's very open compared to other jails. It's one of the nicest jails, the General Trias jail, if you look at it, the conditions of our inmates are really good." (Transcript 1, Lines 106-111)</p> |
| | Support Job Creation through Market Access | <p>"Actually this is our second chance na makatungtong sa Senate upang i-exhibit itong mga paintings na ito...And this time sa tulong po ni Sen. Revilla, siya po yung nag-</p> |

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| Target 8.5: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities | Support Decent Work through Job-Relevant Skills Support Decent Work through Community Reintegration | host ng pagpunta namin doon, makakapag-exhibit kami simula po Lunes, September 11 up to 14 para po at least makita ng “So at least, doon sa loob pa lang, natuturuan sila to do other skills para ma-improve yung kanila kung saan sila magaling para paglabas nila, tutuloy na lang nila. So hindi rin mahirap sa kanila humanap ng trabaho. So that's the importance of the HOPE Project.” (Transcript 1, Lines 73-76) “...inclusivity uhm since PDLs sila, kasama parin dapat sila sa decent work and contributing to sustainable economic growth.” (Transcription 2, Line 200) |
| Target 8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers | Safe Working Conditions | “In terms of the work situation, they are given a certain area there where they can work during their free time. It's like they have their own little workshop, right? So, there are some PDLs there that have their spot where they can engage in these activities.” (Transcript 1, Lines 106-108) |
| | Fair Compensation | “So in this way, para kahit papano their earnings, kahit nga kulong (sic) sila, all their profits will go to those people na nasa labas na naghihintay for them outside..” (Transcription 1, Lines 26-27) |

The Hope Project aligns with SDG 8 targets by providing skills training, financial support, and promoting community reintegration for incarcerated individuals. PDLs will develop skills and earn an income through the project,

contributing to their economic empowerment (Target 8.1) and potentially to the country's economic growth, as seen in the transcripts where participants discuss acquiring new skills and contributing financially to their families. This approach reflects the findings in the literature, where sustainable livelihood programs are shown to reduce poverty and inequality by equipping participants with economic resilience (Ballesteros, Orbeta, Corpus & Ancheta, 2017). PDLs also enhance their skills and diversify product offerings (Target 8.2), leading to higher economic productivity and innovation. The transcripts show PDLs involved in various activities like painting, woodworking, and metalwork, with further skills enhancement through partnerships with organizations like the University of Santo Tomas. The project also supports job creation and the growth of small businesses by providing entrepreneurial skills and market access (Target 8.3). The transcripts mention PDLs having their workshops and the project facilitating exhibitions and trade fairs to showcase their products. PDLs are equipped with job-relevant skills, and their reintegration into the community is facilitated, promoting full and productive employment (Target 8.5). The transcripts discuss how the project helps PDLs find work after release and emphasizes their inclusion in decent work opportunities. This inclusivity aligns with SDG 8's emphasis on reducing inequalities and fostering opportunities for all, including vulnerable populations (United Nations, 2015). Additionally, safe working conditions and fair compensation are ensured for PDLs involved in the program (Target 8.8). The transcripts mention that PDLs are provided with safe working spaces and that the profits from their work go directly to them or their families.

Challenges Faced During the Implementation of the HOPE Project

Table 2. Themes, subthemes and transcript basis with regards to the challenges of the implementation of the Project.

| Theme | Sub-theme | Transcript |
|----------------------|---------------------|--|
| Resource Acquisition | Material Shortages | “One of the challenges was gathering materials and resources... We needed people to support the program.” (Transcription 2, Lines 179-181) |
| | Funding Constraints | “Talagang inaano nila yung mga dinodolate nila ron ng mga gamit na pang livelihood, tapos yung financially na binibigay nila sa para makabuo ng artwork. Talagang hindi sila nangihinayang kasi talagang merong pinupuntahan |

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| Marketing and Sales | Product Pricing | "Basically, we're selling things like the paintings, the bags, so mahirap i-market...But eventually...we'll be able to enlighten them...Naging madali sa amin na i-benta yung mga produkto kahit medyo mahal sya at costly...So medyo pricey yung project...it became word of mouth...Many NGOs helped, they went to jail to see the products as well. (Transcript 1, Lines 41-55) |
| | Market Audience | "Actually this is our second chance na makatungtong sa Senate upang i-exhibit itong mga paintings na ito...And this time sa tulong po ni Sen. Revilla, siya po yung nag-host ng pagpunta namin doon, makakapag-exhibit kami simula po Lunes, September 11 up to 14 para po at least makita ng mga mambabatas din natin na itong mga PDL ay may makakayanan din sa art. "(Transcript 4, Lines 621-627) |

The HOPE Project faced significant challenges in acquiring resources, marketing products, and overcoming societal stigma. However, through partnerships with NGOs, community advocacy, and targeted exhibitions, the project found ways to address these obstacles and build awareness. According to Bocar et al. (2018), such partnerships are critical in addressing systemic barriers in livelihood programs, as they provide supplementary resources and amplify project visibility.

Resource limitations impacted the project's ability to produce goods at scale. To address this challenge, the HOPE Project engaged local NGOs and government bodies for material and financial support. This reflects findings from similar programs, where leveraging multi-stakeholder collaborations effectively bridged resource gaps (Clarke, 1995). Marketing was also difficult due to the high cost of the PDL-made products, which made them less accessible to the public. Word-of-mouth marketing, exhibitions, and partnerships were utilized to broaden awareness.

Initiatives of NKGIT and BJMP to Sustain the HOPE Project

Table 3. Themes, subthemes and transcript basis with regards to the initiatives of NKGIT and BJMP to Sustain the HOPE Project

| Theme | Sub-theme | Transcript |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Advocacy and Awareness | Promoting the Project | "As I said, every year we're doing the HOPE Project continuously... Hanggang ngayon, kahit wala na si Sir Brian dito sa General Trias, still he's doing the project in other cities. Tapos, dinadala niya na yung ito sa Congress, dinadala niya na rin sa Senate." (Transcript 1, Lines 79-81) Sir, may rekomenda namin yung mga katulad ng mga produkto namin sa tulad ng mga bisita, mga dumadalaw dito. May rekomenda namin sir yung mga produkto namin tapos kaya pinapapasyal namin sa gallery para maipakita namin yung mga produkto namin. Yan po ang ginagawa namin para mapabilis siya. Mga dalaw, bisita, yun lang po. (Transcription 8, 1186-1190) |
| | Community Engagement | "The LGUs and NGOs continue to fund materials... It creates a domino effect of support." (Transcription 1, Lines 96-97) |
| | Expanding Reach | "Kumbaga sa ano ko lang. Suggest ko lang sa Hope Project. Lalo pang tumulong sa mga, hindi lang sa PDL, kundi sa mga tao rin dito para mas lalo pang lumawak yung nakakaalam ng Hope Project." (Transcript 5, Lines 922-924) |

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Collaboration and Partnerships | Inter-agency Cooperation | "So, when everyone collaborates, we can easily solve any problems, any challenges that come up." <i>(Transcript 1, Lines 126-128)</i> |
| | Resource Mobilization | "Talagang inaano nila yung mga dinodonate nila ron ng mga gamit na pang livelihood, tapos yung financially na binibigay nila sa para makabuo ng artwork. Talagang hindi sila nangihinayang kasi talagang merong pinupuntahan talaga." <i>(Transcription 3, Lines 486-488)</i> |
| Program Development | Diversification of Products | "They need to think occasionally about what's new, because clients are also looking for something different, right? Before, the bag was just a strap, now there's wood involved, they have wraps, they are even embroidering, painting on the bayong now." <i>(Transcript 1, Lines 103-105)</i> |
| | Skills Enhancement | "Kaya may iba't ibang jail magaling sila puro painting, yung iba naman furniture...So doon ako magbebase ngayon. Marami ano dito ah painting or tattoo artists, automatic painters ko iyon...And para maimprove pa iyon, ang ginagawa namin siyempre nag tri-party agreement kami, Rotary Club of Tagaytay City, and other organizations tulad ng UST Fine Arts para mas mahasa pa iyon.." <i>(Transcription 3, Lines 343-350)</i> "Noong una, hindi pa HOPE project ang pagkaka ano, huli ko na medyo nalaman na HOPE Project pala yun. So, may marami siyang livelihood na inano sa amin, na binigay sa amin. And talaga naman ano baga nag-boom kami, kumita talaga yung mga PDL." <i>(Transcript 9, Lines 1205-1207)</i> |

NKGT and BJMP undertook various initiatives to sustain the Hope Project, focusing on advocacy and awareness, collaboration and partnerships, and program development. Continuous efforts are made to continuously promote the project, for community engagement, and to expand its reach. The transcripts mentioned that the project is promoted through various channels, including interviews, exhibitions, and word-of-mouth marketing. These strategies aligned with sustainable livelihood principles, emphasize continuous advocacy to maintain program relevance and community support (Chambers & Conway, 1992). Inter-agency cooperation and resource mobilization are also crucial for sustaining the project.

The transcripts emphasize the importance of partnerships with NGOs, LGUs, and other organizations for funding, material support, and skills training. This multi-sectoral approach aligns with frameworks that highlight the role of public-private partnerships in ensuring program scalability and long-term impact (Hossain & Mojumder, 2018). Diversifying products and enhancing skills ensure the program's long-term viability. The transcripts mentioned that the project encourages PDLs to develop new skills and create a variety of products to cater to different market needs. By aligning their initiatives with SDG 8, NKGT and BJMP continues to demonstrate commitment by creating inclusive economic opportunities and fostering resilience within vulnerable populations.

Summary of Findings

The Hope Project demonstrated a successful model of prison-based rehabilitation that aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The project provides skills training, financial support, and promotes community reintegration for incarcerated individuals, aligning with various SDG 8 targets. The project has faced challenges such as resource limitations, marketing difficulties, and social stigma. However, through strategic partnerships, advocacy, and skill development initiatives, the project has achieved success in equipping PDLs with marketable skills, supporting their families financially, and promoting community reintegration. The continuous efforts to promote the project, engage the community, and expand its reach, along with inter-agency cooperation and resource mobilization, are crucial for sustaining the project. Diversifying products and enhancing skills ensure the program's long-term viability.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Hope Project Livelihood Program, a collaborative initiative between the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGK) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in General Trias City. The project also seeks to empower incarcerated men and women by providing them with the necessary resources and skills to establish sustainable livelihoods and successfully reintegrate into society upon release.

The study delved into the project's impact on Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), examining how it fosters hope, empowerment, and financial stability. Through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, the researchers uncovered the project's profound influence on the lives of PDLs and their families. Participants shared how the project not only offered a chance to acquire skills and earn an income but also renewed their sense of belonging and purpose. This sense of purpose, coupled with the opportunity for financial support, proved to be crucial in preserving family ties and alleviating economic pressures. The study also highlighted the project's success in facilitating a sense of dignity among PDLs, enabling them to contribute positively to society despite their circumstances.

However, the Hope Project's journey was not without challenges. The study revealed significant obstacles in acquiring resources, marketing products, and overcoming societal stigma. Resource limitations posed a threat to the project's ability to produce goods at scale, while marketing difficulties arose due to the high cost of PDL-made products. Additionally, the project combated the inherent stigma associated with supporting PDLs. Despite these hurdles, the project demonstrated resilience through strategic partnerships with NGOs and government bodies, community advocacy, and targeted exhibitions.

The study further emphasized the Hope Project's significant contribution to economic growth by equipping PDLs with job-relevant skills, creating financial sustainability, and fostering community reintegration. Through skill training and partnerships with NGOs and LGUs, the project empowered PDLs with marketable skills, enhancing their chances of finding work post-release. The project's commitment to reducing the stigma associated with incarceration and presenting PDLs as productive members of society proved to be vital in promoting community integration.

The study therefore concludes that the Hope Project is a successful model of prison-based rehabilitation that aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). By equipping PDLs with marketable skills, supporting their families financially, and promoting community reintegration, the project showcases a holistic approach to rehabilitation and sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the Hope Project's impact and sustainability. These recommendations are tailored to specific stakeholders involved in the project's implementation and future development. The stakeholders include the Nagkakaisang Kababaihan ng General Trias (NKGK), the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Local Government Units (LGUs), future researchers, and the broader community. Each stakeholder will have a unique role to play in supporting and expanding the Hope Project's reach and effectiveness.

For NKGK:

1. Maintain open communication and coordination with BJMP officials to ensure the program's continued success and alignment with the needs of PDLs.
2. Explore and introduce new livelihood programs based on market demand and the skills and interests of PDLs, ensuring their continued engagement and motivation.
3. Design and implement programs that specifically address the needs and challenges faced by women PDLs, promoting their empowerment and successful reintegration into society.

For BJMP:

1. Advocate for the expansion of the Hope Project to other correctional facilities across the Philippines, sharing best practices and learnings from the General Trias City Jail implementation.
2. Offer comprehensive support services to PDLs, including counseling, mentorship, and educational opportunities, to enhance their rehabilitation and reintegration process.
3. Implement a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the project's impact on PDLs' economic well-being, recidivism rates, and overall quality of life after release.

For General Trias LGU:

1. Allocate sufficient resources to support the Hope Project's expansion and sustainability, recognizing its contribution to economic growth and community development.
2. Facilitate training for PDLs on effective marketing strategies, including pricing and audience targeting. Additionally, establish more avenues for product exhibitions within the city and neighboring areas, such as local fairs or online platforms managed by the LGU.
3. Work with educational institutions and NGOs to provide advanced technical and entrepreneurial training to PDLs, preparing them for a competitive job market post-incarceration.

For other LGUs:

1. Emulate the collaboration between the BJMP, local NGOs like NKGIT, and civic organizations such as the Rotary Club. These partnerships provide a robust support system for implementing similar livelihood projects.
2. Set up training workshops within correctional facilities focusing on diverse skills such as crafting, woodworking, and painting. Pair these with entrepreneurial mentorship programs to prepare PDLs for self-sustaining ventures.
3. Draft and pass local ordinances to institutionalize livelihood projects for PDLs, ensuring long-term funding and sustainability.

For Future Researchers (Foreign Service):

1. Explore the Hope Project's potential applicability in diverse cultural contexts, considering international perspectives on incarceration, rehabilitation, and reintegration.
2. Analyze the diplomatic implications of implementing similar livelihood programs in other countries, examining potential collaborations, challenges, and benefits within a foreign service framework.
3. Develop policy recommendations for integrating livelihood-focused rehabilitation programs into foreign policy initiatives, promoting social reintegration and economic empowerment as key components of international cooperation and development efforts.