



IMPACT, DIFFUSION AND SCALING-UP OF A COMPREHENSIVE LAND-USE PLANNING APPROACH IN THE PHILIPPINES

From Development Cooperation to National Policies

Executive Summary

2018

Imprint

Published by

German Institute for Development
Evaluation (DEval)
Fritz-Schäffer-Straße 26
53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel: +49 (0)228 33 69 07-0

E-Mail: info@DEval.org

www.DEval.org

Authors

Dr Gerald Leppert

Dr Lena Hohfeld

Dr Malte Lech

Dr Thomas Wencker

Responsible

Dr Sven Harten

Collaboration in Data Collection

Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College (NIPSC)
Visayas State University (VSU)

Design

MedienMélange:Kommunikation!, Hamburg

www.medienmelange.de

Editing

Jannet King, Christiane Engel-Haas

Photo credits

Julian Barth / Kigali-Films (Cover)

Bibliographical reference

Leppert, G., L. Hohfeld, M. Lech and T. Wencker
(2018), *Impact, Diffusion and Scaling-Up of a
Comprehensive Land-Use Planning Approach in
the Philippines. From Development Cooperation
to National Policies*, German Institute for Devel-
opment Evaluation (DEval), Bonn.

Printing

Bonifatius,

Paderborn



© German Institute for Development Evaluation
(DEval), June 2018

ISBN 978-3-96126-077-5 (printed edition)

ISBN 978-3-96126-078-2 (PDF)

The German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) is mandated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to independently analyse and assess German development interventions.

Evaluation reports contribute to the transparency of development results and provide policy-makers with evidence and lessons learned, based on which they can shape and improve their development policies.

This report can be downloaded as a PDF file from the DEval website:

www.deval.org/en/evaluation-reports.html

BMZ response to this evaluation is available at
<http://www.bmz.de/en/ministry/evaluation/Evaluation/evaluierungsberichte-stellungnahmen/index.html>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Land is a vitally important resource. It is the foundation for socio-economic development and the functioning of local ecosystems. In order to secure the fair participation of all stakeholders and to ensure sustainable use, comprehensive land management beyond self-regulation is needed. Land-use planning is the technical instrument that facilitates an inclusive and transparent allocation of land, the steering of land use and natural resources. Its goal is to ensure the harmonization of potentially conflicting demands made on land.

The Philippine case demonstrates the vital importance of a comprehensive approach to land-use planning and development. The challenges that the Philippines are facing are relevant to many developing countries, including an exposure to natural hazards and climate change, scarcity of land and other resources, and endangered ecosystems. The relevance of comprehensive land-use planning is further underlined by challenging socio-economic conditions, such as high population growth, unequal economic development and poverty, and a modernizing as well as decentralized public administration. Such physical and socio-economic conditions require a holistic and broader planning perspective across sectors, jurisdictions and ecosystems. Land-use planning thus shapes rural and urban development, supports adaptation to climate change and environmental conservation, and helps to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.

This evaluation report presents findings of a rigorous impact evaluation, following a theory-based approach and applying a mixed-methods design. It assesses a technical approach on enhanced land-use planning in the Philippines implemented over ten years. The intervention has been implemented by the Philippine–German Cooperation and the Philippine planning authority, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). The Philippine–German Cooperation developed and implemented this multi-level and multi-stakeholder technical approach in the domain of the Environment and Rural Development (EnRD) programme, which was managed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

In its design and implementation, the intervention can be considered a typical example of technical development cooperation that links systemic capacity development on multiple levels with the achievement of long-term and development goals. The intervention aimed to improve processes and structures for land-use and development planning in the Philippines by capacitating and training local land-use planning officers, in order to contribute to long-term improvements in various land-use related areas. It has the potential to contribute to goals of current development agendas, such as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, eradication of poverty, environmental protection, and improvement of welfare and (rural) livelihoods. Evaluating this intervention provides valuable information for development cooperation in general, particularly for interventions supporting good (decentralized) governance and local ownership, disaster risk management, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Our findings are also pertinent to the strategic question of how to build local ownership and scale up good practices from local to national level.

The enhanced land-use planning approach consists of a bundle of measures and activities. These include training schemes, technical assistance, and the development and implementation of processes and instruments for comprehensive and participatory land-use planning. The initial intervention, called “SIMPLE” (Sustainable Integrated Management and Planning for Local Government Ecosystems), started in 2006. In intensive cooperation with stakeholders in the Philippine planning and land-use administration, the Philippine–German Cooperation developed and implemented this enhanced and participatory land-use planning approach in selected municipalities in the regions Eastern Visayas (region 8) and Western Visayas (region 6). In cooperation with the HLURB, and in the course of updating and developing the enhanced Comprehensive Land-Use Planning (eCLUP) guidebooks, the stakeholders carried out a process to adopt the core aspects of the SIMPLE approach as a national policy on enhanced land-use planning. At the close of the EnRD programme at the end of 2015, the national eCLUP guidelines, which had taken on substantial components of the previous locally tested SIMPLE approach, were officially launched.

In an international comparison carried out by DEval of similar land-use planning and management interventions implemented by GIZ, SIMPLE can be considered a typical “mid-level” development intervention in

terms of technical and administrative complexity. The activities implemented are similar to other interventions in other country contexts that have established structures of planning administration but require technical sophistication in planning processes as well as improvements in inter-agency coordination. Hence, the results of this evaluation can be transferred to many other intervention contexts.

This evaluation is concerned with the main question: what effects of ten years of enhanced land-use planning efforts can be identified at household, barangay¹, and municipal level?

We follow the evaluation criteria by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). The evaluation prioritized the assessment of four main evaluation objectives:

- The first objective follows the OECD-DAC criterion *relevance*, measuring whether enhanced land-use planning is consistent with current national and global development agendas (and through them with the priorities of donor and partner country); this includes an assessment of the intervention's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- the second follows the criterion *effectiveness*: whether the intervention improved land-use planning and planning techniques and thus achieved its objectives;
- the third assesses its *impact*, measuring the medium- to long-term effects, including impacts of the intervention on environmental and socio-economic indicators; and
- the fourth addresses the *sustainability* of the intervention by assessing the continuity of intervention benefits, analysing, in particular, the scaling-up of the intervention, innovation and policy diffusion, and drawing lessons for the replication of the approach.

Objectives referring to the criterion *efficiency* were not addressed in this evaluation. The focus of the evaluation is the impact assessment of a technical approach on enhanced land-use planning that involved several stakeholders and for which separate cost data were not available.

The core of this evaluation is a rigorous impact assessment, in order to measure and quantify effects in five impact fields, ranging from improvements to administrative structures and conditions in planning administrations, the handling of natural resources, measures and activities in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and functioning of local governance, to welfare improvements for the affected population. The impact fields are based on a comprehensive reconstruction of the Theory of Change (ToC) of the intervention.

This methodological approach to rigorously measuring the effects of a complex intervention to improve land-use planning is, so far, unique, as comprehensive impact assessments of planning tools and land-use policy are rare. The evaluation thus contributes to the debate on the effectiveness of land-use planning policy and its technical approaches, and also shows that rigorous impact evaluation of complex technical assistance interventions is indeed feasible in the development context. Following evaluation standards, this evaluation combines methodological rigour and accuracy, transparency and scientific accountability with utility, fairness, independence, and integrity.

For this evaluation, we apply a theory-based approach and a mixed-methods design: we use panel data from a multi-level survey, qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, literature review, document analysis of land-use planning documents, and geographic data and information. The methodological design is based on a preliminary study on the first round of data collection by Garcia Schustereder et al., published in 2016. The panel data comprise 3,000 households, spread across 300 barangays in 100 municipalities, with and without GIZ assistance, across eleven provinces in the Visayas regions, measured in two points of time (2012 and 2016). The impact assessment method is based on a quasi-experimental design, in which we apply a propensity score matching procedure with lagged outcome variable. With this procedure, we identify “statistical twins”, based on several dozen characteristics of the municipalities, barangays, and households.

¹ Barangay is an official administrative unit below municipalities and cities. It is used in accordance with the term village. A barangay is headed by the barangay captain (village head).

This enables us to attribute effects to the intervention and to rigorously assess the effects of a complex land-use planning intervention. We assessed effects on numerous indicators at household, barangay and municipal level in five impact fields.

We draw several conclusions with regard to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria *relevance* and *effectiveness*.

The intervention shows a high degree of *relevance*. For this criterion, we assessed the consistency of the intervention or its outcomes with national and global development agendas. With regard to the global agenda on sustainable development, we find significant potential for enhanced land-use planning interventions to contribute to the overarching goals of the SDGs. However, at this stage, we rarely find measurable effects contributing to particular goals. With regard to national agendas, enhanced land-use planning substantially contributes to the goals of the Philippine Development Plan 2012–2017 and it is also partly reflected in several sectoral strategies of the German development cooperation. Our results affirm the relevance of the intervention in terms of aiming to improve basic necessities of the affected population in line with overarching development goals. It can be considered a precondition for the implementation of other rural development interventions.

In terms of the *effectiveness* of the intervention, results suggest that enhanced land-use planning was moderately effective. It improved land-use planning and techniques as well as planning capacities in intervention municipalities. Municipalities receiving the intervention show higher plan quality, greater comprehensiveness, and we find a positive effect on plan approval. Furthermore, it contributed to a more frequent implementation of mandatory planning elements. In contrast, little effect is visible on soft planning elements such as stronger participation, plan integration (between barangay and municipal level) as well as in addressing structural problems concerning understaffed municipal planning administrations and insufficient enforcement and implementation of plans and planning goals. The evaluation also highlights that other rural development interventions (such as other EnRD project components) contribute to positive effects of enhanced land-use planning. Vice versa, it is important to note that functioning land-use planning is also an important success factor for other rural development measures. Hence, land-use planning and other rural development interventions are interdependent.

Our assessment of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria *impact* and *sustainability* leads to following conclusions:

We identify the following limited to moderate impacts in the fields “Sustainable Natural Resource Management”, “Disaster Risk Management”, “Local Governance”, and “Welfare”:

With regard to *Sustainable Natural Resource Management*, the intervention was able to increase the number of protected areas (but not marine sanctuaries) and of conservation and livelihood projects such as tree planting. There is no measurable effect on actual change of land use reported by households, nor on household awareness related to topics of environmental conservation.

In the impact field of *Disaster Risk Management (DRM)*, we identify that municipalities receiving the intervention show strengthened capacities to engage in DRM, especially with regard to technical and planning measures. At barangay and household level, positive effects such as greater disaster awareness or more proactive disaster management strategies are restricted to municipalities in region 8 that started receiving the intervention only after 2012.

Considering *Local Governance*, we find only limited effects on the functioning and public perception of local governance, and most of them were negative. Trust, as well as the perception of local government functioning among households, diminished, given that the underlying power structures found in many municipalities were not addressed by the intervention. This influenced, for instance, the finalization of political parts of the Comprehensive Land-Use Plan (CLUP) such as the zoning ordinance. It should be noted that such underlying issues were beyond the goals and scope of the initial intervention. Moreover, the analysis further revealed a significant increase in the number of conflicts; further inquiry showed that the intervention led to im-

proved visibility of previously hidden or latent conflicts. The intervention contributed to a more active conflict handling by municipalities and barangays. In terms of the provision of public services, we predominantly identify positive effects.

Lastly, and with regard to household *Welfare*, we find almost no attributable effects of the intervention. This is not surprising, as the impact field of welfare is located at the end of the causal chain. Given the timing of the intervention and evaluation, effects have to be expected to be long term, and will only materialize if the existing interruptions of the causal chain are addressed.

There are several *cross-cutting* results from the impact assessment:

- First, the intensity of impacts decreases from the municipal level down to the household level, and thus hints at issues of missing implementation, lacking information, and at shortcomings in community participation. Hence, a number of anticipated impacts have not (yet) materialized. This was particularly the case at household and barangay level.
- Second, as a cross-cutting finding through all impact fields, we find that more training leads to more and stronger effects.
- Third, long-term support shows more positive effects, although this finding is less conclusive.
- Fourth, we find stronger effects if there are also other supporting interventions, such as other components of the EnRD programme. This is particularly the case for municipal-level indicators on land-use planning and sustainable natural resource governance.
- Fifth, as cross-cutting factors that counteract effects, we identify weak enforcement and implementation of plans, insufficient information and participation of population, as well as insufficient resources at municipal level – factors that are the responsibility of the Philippine planning system.

Our assessment attributes a high degree of *sustainability* to the intervention, defined here as continuity of the benefits of the development intervention.² Central elements of the intervention have been taken up and integrated into national land-use planning (eCLUP) policy. Other positive signs for the continuity of benefits are the successful diffusion of policies and innovations. Improved CLUP development continues, including an increased number of capacitated planning staff in municipalities and provinces, and many institutional and technical advancements are now in place, such as evidence-based planning along a specified process, technical writing, and the use of geographic information systems. Some of the improvements by the intervention were even taken up by other, non-participating municipalities through informal knowledge dissemination and sharing. However, we also see that participatory planning has received a lower priority in the eCLUP guidelines (compared to the SIMPLE intervention), as has the inclusion of barangay priorities. As threats to the continuity of benefits, we identify current issues of land titles, land-use rights, and highly concentrated land ownership. For different reasons, neither SIMPLE nor eCLUP aimed at addressing these structural issues in enhanced land-use planning.

Our results underline that, despite encouraging results, several challenges remain. Long-term effects of the intervention are dependent upon the continuation and intensity of developed training schemes, the degree of the future implementation of public participation, improvements to ensure public accountability, and the future resource situation among provincial and municipal planning administrations. In these fields, we identify weaknesses. Bottlenecks concerning personnel constraints might hamper long-term effects, due to shortcomings in implementation and monitoring. Furthermore, the sustainability and continuing effect of the intervention, is crucially dependent upon *supporting institutional factors* such as political support in affected municipalities and provinces, and ultimately upon a comprehensive harmonization of land-use pol-

² We covered the broader aspects of a contemporary understanding of sustainability (in line with Agenda 2030), including the social, economic, ecological, and political dimensions of sustainable development in the analysis of the intervention's contribution to the sustainable development goals in the OECD-DAC criterion relevance. This is in line with the recommendation of Noltze et al. (2018) to sharpen the existing criterion of sustainability in order to come to more robust empirical findings.

icy in the Philippines. This requires a substantial reconsideration of the situation of land-use rights and tenure security. To what extent this reconsideration, as well as continued support to good democratic governance and decentralized institutions, will be feasible in the current political climate in the country lies beyond the scope of the evaluation. The pragmatic approach by the Philippine–German Cooperation can be criticized as not addressing underlying pressing and structural problems of unequal land ownership, land titling and land-use rights.

Although these underlying issues are very difficult to handle in the case of the Philippines through land-use planning interventions alone, an enhanced land-use planning intervention might still be able to ease the pressures associated with insecure tenure and land-use rights by means of gradually formalizing, for instance, informal living arrangements. The intervention by the Philippine–German Cooperation reached a gradual formalization only to some extent. As our results show, a too narrow focus on planning can actually even exacerbate existing tensions around land use.

The aforementioned systemic challenges and underlying issues pose a threat to the impact of the intervention. We therefore conclude that land-use planning can only be successful when political and institutional conditions are conducive, and when plans are properly implemented. As obstacles, we identified frictions within local administrations, as well as in local policy-making (political and personal priorities conflicting with planning goals). Furthermore, high demands and striving for transparency by donor organizations might overburden local planning administrations; for example, interventions might bring previously hidden conflicts to the surface and may reveal inconsistencies to the public. This can be turned into a positive outcome, provided that local administrations are capacitated to handle these issues – something that could partially be achieved by the intervention. This is another argument for supplementing land-use planning with interventions for good governance. Other obstacles are associated with resources that are more limited after the finalization of the development intervention. In this case, ambitious goals in the development intervention are further pursued after the intervention – even on a national level, but with substantially fewer, maybe insufficient, financial and personal resources.

On the basis of this assessment, we recommend several solutions to the identified weaknesses and problems. We address these evidence-based recommendations to different types of actors and entities. The recommendations are intended to support: (a) political actors to improve strategic decision-making for future development interventions; (b) implementing agencies to improve development and design of new land-use planning interventions in the Philippines and other countries; (c) Philippine national agencies or ministries and the Philippine–German cooperation to continually improve land-use and development planning in the Philippines; and (d) Philippine political actors to improve the framework for land-use planning and development planning in the Philippines.

The recommendations refer to important aspects of designing and conducting land-use planning interventions, and refer to the consideration of essential context factors.

Several context and framework conditions are of substantial relevance to either the implementation and enforcement of plans, or the sustainability of intervention benefits. Addressing land-use rights and land-use conflicts are of utmost importance as they hamper the sustainability of land-use planning interventions and have negative distributional impacts. We recommend that land-use planning interventions need to address more systematically the underlying mechanisms to improve the unsolved situation of land-use rights and tenure security. In order not to overburden specific land-use planning interventions, this could be done through using synergies with good governance interventions.

As a major factor impeding the implementation and enforcement of plans, we identified negative local political conditions and power structures. Consequentially, such structures interrupt the impact chain after the finalization of planning documents. In these cases, implementation and enforcement is then either not carried out or not implemented according to plans. Thus, we recommend that land-use planning interventions need to do more to bind those actors to the common good and to make them accountable.

There is no doubt that land-use planning can only achieve anticipated development impacts when plans are properly implemented. Hence, we recommend several measures to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of plans. So-called CLUPs “for the shelf” have to be avoided. This includes the consideration of legally enforceable measures and sanctions if administrative implementation contradicts plans. Generally, public accountability of actors in land-use planning is not only an issue at the local level, but also an issue among planning authorities, and, thus, should be improved.

Our recommendations not only refer to the implementation of plans but also concern the improvement of planning itself:

Training and capacity-building of the development intervention led to measurable impacts. However, the situation of training and capacity-building in the eCLUP framework at national level looks different. Hence, we recommend that the system of training, capacity- and human resources development be overhauled in order to improve local planning capacities and to avoid a brain drain of technical staff. More and better-coordinated trainings are necessary. Long-term support for municipalities showed positive impacts, as did land-use planning in combination with other rural development interventions. Hence, for the planning of new interventions, we recommend the consideration of these two factors.

The development and approval process of land-use plans is lengthy, time- and resource-consuming. We address this issue in several recommendations on the adjustment of local CLUP development processes to ensure timely and effective plan development, a changed approval process, and better coordination between LGUs and between agencies at provincial level. Public participation and information in the development process should be strengthened, and efforts should be increased to ensure the consideration of local needs and priorities in the implementation of land-use plans. Participation efforts need to be substantiated with sufficient resources.

A large number of aspects of the intervention by the Philippine–German Cooperation have contributed to national policies and have heavily influenced national-level land-use planning policies, particularly the eCLUP guidelines. Thus, an early consideration of national scaling-up opportunities in the planning of new development interventions is recommended as it is contributing to the continuation of intervention benefits. We also recommend that horizontal innovation diffusion – from intervention municipalities to those not receiving an intervention – should be actively supported. In this case, provincial trainer pools and learning sites (in particular, ambitious municipalities that have proven to plan effectively) were promising concepts that are worth replicating.

In the Philippines, one of the main factors hampering development impacts is insufficient national framework conditions, which are the prerequisite for successful land-use planning. The lack of a consistent national framework leads to conflicting mandates and the inability to properly address unresolved issues of land-use rights and tenure security.

Development assistance and national expenditures for economic development could be more effectively spent if evaluations pointed to the effectiveness of interventions. Thus, we recommend that policy-makers and implementers need to consider the prerequisites for reliable and rigorous evaluations right at the start of the process of developing interventions.