# LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS: BUILDING UP BEYOND DIRECT SERVICE DELIVERY

*A Feedback to DSWD in Davao Region on Technical Assistance*

A Report on the Research entitled "*Perceptions of Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the Usefulness of Technical Assistance Provided by DSWD in Davao Region*"

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Field Office XI of Department of Social Welfare and Development in Davao City initiated in late 2007, a study on the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers' (LSWDOs) perceptions on the usefulness of DSWD's technical assistance (TA). Since the enforcement of TA functions, a deviation from its historic direct social service delivery mandate, there was no assessment being conducted to determine the level of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the usefulness of the technical assistance provided by DSWD in Davao Region. Thus the study sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the different levels of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the technical assistance of DSWD Davao Region?
2. What are the LSWDOs basic functions needing TA from the DSWD?
3. What are the factors that influence the satisfaction of the LSWDOs in the provision of technical assistance by the DSWD?

It explores the relationship between the level of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the technical assistance of DSWD and their technical assistance(TA)-seeking behaviour as Advisers to the Local Chief Executives on the current condition of the Social Welfare and Development sector in the locality.

The research serves as a gauge in determining more appropriate and relevant DSWD's Technical Assistance for the enhancement of the roles and functions of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers. Specifically, it guides the DSWD in determining and categorizing level of LSWDOs' technical needs in terms of: Public and Social Policy Practice and Social Welfare and Development sectoral planning and programming; Standards in the SWD Delivery Systems; as well as LSWDOs Social Workers' Core Competency in: Case Management, Policy Advocacy, Program Development, Social Administration, Networking and Linkages, Community Development and After Care Service.

The study provides the LSWDOs an opportunity to articulate their expectations and satisfaction from DSWD's assistance. It creates a venue for professional self-esteem check towards valuing self and the profession's contribution to positive social change in the local and national landscape.

Thus, the research becomes a prompt support to the Magna Carta for Public Social Workers.

Total enumeration of fifty-three (53) LSWDOs of Davao Region who served the same LGU since 1992 was considered. The LSWDOs participated in the study through individual interviews and focus group discussions.

The synthesizing tool utilized is based on the conceptual framework where LSWDOs' personal resources (using socio-demographic data) play a critical role in their adoption or assumption of functions and tasks as Advisers to Local Chief Executives in Social Welfare and Development sectoral planning and programming. Sources of influence may include the social work profession itself, LGU leadership, NGOs/POs; Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc.(PASWI)/Association of Local Social Welfare and Development Workers (ALSWDW); and Family, Peers. These influences may in turn, affect their perceptions about DSWD's technical assistance in their growth and development as Local Social Welfare and Development Officers.

Using SPSS, the correlation between the level of satisfaction of the LSWDOs on the TA of DSWD and their TA-Seeking Behaviour has a low significance or in essence is not significant where P= ⁻.214. There is little evidence manifested in the study about the link between levels of agreement and disagreement on the provisions of technical assistance of DSWD and the technical assistance being sought by the LSWDOs since the devolution process.

LSWDOs level of satisfaction on the technical assistance of DSWD reached Level 2. Level 2 operationally means satisfaction of LSWDO is relatively strong on at least two (2) DSWD technical functions (e.g. Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment) and Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring (social welfare and development standards check and review). There is no single LSWDO who have strong feeling of satisfaction on all the three areas of TA.

Satisfaction is relatively strong likewise to projects with funding as in the ECCD and livelihood related activities. Pilot projects seem to be complicated for the LSWDOs as these require more human, time and material resources with solid ground work. Sustainability of pilot projects remains a problem in the context of the local conditions thus evaluation is critical.

The study concluded that the correlation between level of satisfaction of LSWDOs on DSWD TA and the technical assistance-seeking behaviour of LSWDOs is not significant. However, as LSWDOs command initiatives and advance their interest in seeking TA on various DSWD functions to fully effect devolution, a strong satisfaction of DSWD TA by the LSWDOs remains in the level that pertain to legislative policy advocacy, formulation of plans, programs and social technology development and standards setting and compliance monitoring.

Services and technical assistance to intermediaries that include professional self-esteem development and complementation/augmentation of direct services (center and community-based) are still perceived to be inadequate if not satisfactorily extended.

As the LSWDOs expect technical assistance in varied forms and events on the DSWD functions, their negative collective reaction to the survey and study presents a "sweet lemon" like response. They deplored why it took almost two decades for DSWD to gather feedback and conduct an evaluation.

Achieving a more satisfying and dynamic relationship between DSWD and LSWDO is strongly mediated by the professional self-image, LGU leadership/LCE stance and attitude, social work professional community and academic and professional advancement or pursuits of each LSWDO.

The personal resources (professional self-image, assertion and negotiation skills) of the LSWDO coupled with early positive work experiences indeed play a primary role in their early stage of survival as emerging social work leaders at the height of devolution. Peers and family orientation on social work seem to positively complement the abilities demonstrated on the ground disturbingly fertile with politicians' machinations.

Absent in the flashback and review of realities behind the devolved functions of DSWD is the engagement of the social work professional community (PASWI and or NASWEI). More importantly, the formation and role of the Association of Local Government Social Welfare Officers (ALGSWs) is not mentioned as contributory to whatever level of confidence the LSWDOs gain.

The local government leadership poses a challenge to LSWDOs' capacity and ability to persuade in order to win over the entire LGU to the side of the marginalized, oppressed, exploited and deprived sectors of the local community.  As any social welfare and development goals and programs and projects are first and foremost geared to improve the lives, empower and enhance social functioning of the local majority constituents, social work in local government still in a dilemma of pursuing professional enterprise. This perfectly reminds the LSWDOs in their quest for a niche in local governance.

The mechanisms of social work enterprise paved by PASWI and NASWEI in the Philippines defined the professional autonomy sixty years ago. Yet and still, public social workers in local government are subject to the imperatives of an organizational life not within their sphere of control. Apprehensions as to when to gain full professional status prevail if not put LSWDOs to passivity and resignation. With the political climate, social work is susceptible to the views of those who control its resources.

Challenges on the level of competence of LSWDOs in their role performance towards responsive local governance remain critical at this stage of Philippine social development where globalization is effacing and impacting negatively to the social work client system. DSWD' s role in improving people's lives is much implied than ever and emphatically integral in its current mandate of extending technical assistance to local government units. Notwithstanding, its role and function in direct service delivery via pilot projects (that demand impact evaluation vis a vis capacity of SWD offices to sustain and replicability) continues to be a touching base dimension of its basic function -  the primary social welfare arm of the state.

The study presents a set of recommendations for primary stakeholders and classified as follows:

**For DSWD**

1. Periodic assessment and evaluation of TA provision with the participation of LCE
1. Periodic technical assistance events and forms should be varied and creative and according to LSWDO's particularities.
2. Provide incentives to LGU Social Workers on implementation of National Program
3. Lobbying of the full implementation of Magna Carta for Social Workers
4. Lobby on the creation of MSWDO item
5. Conduct team building/ capacity building per sectoral concerns, laws and national policies
6. Research agenda development and periodic conduct of studies with active engagement of LSWDOs on social work research via SWD L-net expansion
10. Coaching and support for TARA plans with corresponding ritualization of actions binding for LGU
11. DSWD's engagement with local development councils for executive agenda development while strengthening relations with local legislative bodies for localization of national policies.
12. Lobby for more social workers in court
13. Develop and publish professional resource kit on specific line of work or technical expertise expected of LSWDOs.
14. Develop and conduct assertion training that enhances local social work leadership and management
15. Appoint DSWD liaison for clustered SWD Offices as point person on TA to avoid fast turn-over of focal persons and for continuity and smooth follow-through of TA. Implication is for DSWD itself to train field officers with enough confidence and competence to provide comprehensive support to LSWDOs thereby creating DSWD sustainable TA environment.
16. Format, focus and logistical support to technical assistance are important elements in the review of TA of DSWD to LSWDOs.
17. Launch a mobile school of social work administration and management designed for a 4-10 month course work with built-in practicum as a packaged support with university credit equivalent for LSWDOs especially for non-BSSW and non-MSW.

**For LSWDOs**

1. Sustain professional self-development program
2. Conscious positive projection of professional self
3. Formation of professional study circles within SWD office as an initiative for continuous peer-learning and peer technical support.

4. Consciously seek technical assistance as a form of continuing professional education in and outside DSWD
5. Consciously identify professional self with local social work professional organization by being active member or officer of PASWI chapter
6. Build local social work resource pool for LGU program support (e.g. lawyers pool, accountants, fund raisers, grants development and funding partners' relationship building, etc)
7. Conduct local social work exchange or exposure for theory-building and field practice check and review.

**For PASWI/NASWEI**

1. Provide systematic professional continuing education
2. Dynamic formation of and support for chapters in the localities as support group in advancing professional interests within the localities
3. Advance the LSWDOs' capacity as Agency Field Instructors for student field education as venue for exchange of young and maturing social workers in strengthening professional autonomy through regular field placement
4. Sustain and strengthen SWD offices as social laboratory for social work theory-practice continuum in field education

**Plan of Action**

An immediate plan includes a conduct of a research forum with broad participation of stakeholders in Davao Region. A roundtable discussion series with local chief executives to disseminate the study results complements the research forum that may spell more concrete support to the LSWDOs from the local government units while creating a venue for DSWD to demonstrate its capacity to deal with governance with both interpersonal and intellectual skills in full play.

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## I.      The Context

### RATIONALE

In line with the passage of the Local Government Code (LGC), some national government agencies, including the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) effected the devolution of basic services together with related facilities, personnel, budget, property and equipment to the local government units (LGUs).

Over fifteen years now, only a few literature could cite the challenges faced by devolved workers. In a study conducted by Rollolazo (1996), it revealed that some are not well-prepared to manage Social Welfare and Development (SWD) concerns in their areas, and are facing political interference in terms of clientele preference and prioritization at the provincial, city and municipal levels. Another author purports that though LGUs are mandated to implement basic services, experiences indicate that a number of Local Social Welfare and Development Workers could not immediately absorb and implement devolved programs on Social Welfare and Development (SWD) sector. Among the reasons identified were inadequate resources and technical capabilities of the concerned staff.

With the passage of Executive Order (EO) 15 series of 1998 which supported the new paradigm shift in governance, the DSWD's primary function has been transformed from a direct service deliverer to technical assistance provider. Consistent with the provisions of EO 15, the DSWD is mandated to provide assistance to LGUs, non-government organizations (NGOs), peoples' organizations (POs) and other members of civil society in the implementation of programs, projects and services that will alleviate poverty and empower disadvantaged individuals, families and communities for an improved quality of life. Due to certain mandates and consideration, however, there were services retained for implementation by the national DSWD. Continuous development and implementation of the special and pilot projects have been carried out in partnership with Local Social Welfare and Development Offices of LGUs to address emerging social problems and/or in keeping with national directives.

It is for this reason that the department strengthened its Technical Assistance (TA) to continuously grant the necessary assistance articulated by the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDOs) which include but not limited to: continuous provision of external inputs such as accessing to experts, studies, research and development, logistics, training and equipment, and consultancy services. It is envisioned that the Technical Assistance

function of DSWD to the Local Social Welfare and Development Offices would be beneficial to hasten the delivery of appropriate social services in the locality.

Since the enforcement of Technical Assistance functions, there was no assessment being conducted to determine the level of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the usefulness of the technical assistance provided by DSWD in Davao Region.

**Research Objectives**

1. The study was conducted to determine the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers' perceptions on the usefulness of the technical assistance provided by DSWD in Davao Region in relation to the performance of their functions as Advisers to the Local Chief Executives (LCEs) along Social Welfare and Development Sector. Specifically, the study sought to address the following questions:

4.      What are the different levels of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the technical assistance of DSWD Davao Region?

5.      What are the LSWDOs basic functions needing TA from the DSWD?

6.      What are the factors that influence the satisfaction of the LSWDOs in the provision of technical assistance by the DSWD?

2. The study also explored the relationship between the level of satisfaction of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers on the technical assistance of DSWD and their technical assistance(TA)-seeking behaviour as Advisers to the Local Chief Executives on the current condition of the Social Welfare and Development sector in the locality.

**Significance of the Research**

The research will serve as a gauge in determining more appropriate and relevant DSWD's Technical Assistance for the enhancement of the roles and functions of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers. Specifically, it will guide the DSWD in determining and categorizing level of LSWDOs' technical needs in terms of: Public and Social Policy Practice and Social Welfare and Development sectoral planning and programming; Standards in the SWD Delivery Systems; as well as LSWDOs Social Workers' Core Competency in: Case Management, Policy Advocacy, Program Development, Social Administration, Networking and Linkages, Community Development and After Care Service.

On the part of LSWDOs, the study will provide them the opportunity to articulate their expectations and satisfaction from DSWD's assistance. It will create a venue for professional self-esteem check towards valuing self and the profession's contribution to positive social change in the local and national landscape.

Thus, the research becomes a prompt support to the Magna Carta for Public Social Workers.

**Scope and Limitations**

The study covered fifty-three (53) **Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDOs)** of Davao Region with 4 provinces, 6 Cities and 43 Municipalities. As recognized in the research that the actual devolution of DSWD happened in 1992, the scope of the study started from the period, 1992 up to the present.

A bias or frustration on the part of the newly hired or designated Local Social Welfare and Development Officers, and new entrant local government officials may not lead to accurate results. Thus, the researcher excluded them in the survey respondents.

There were participants who did not make it to the actual sessions of the FGD. Thus, the 53 participants who joined the survey were not all present during the FGDs. The use of meta cards in the actual handling of the FGDs tended to limit the flow of discussion. There were questions that seemed to hinder probing of items in the survey questionnaire and the FGD guide questions set for the study. Nevertheless, responses were taken as to complement ideas and experiences relevant to the over-all purpose of the investigation.

**Implications**

There was an apprehension on the part of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers to support the study if the DSWD serves as enumerators/interviewers. Their participation and support would be curtailed and they may not feel free to speak-up with regards to their personal views on the DSWD's roles and functions. The hiring of enumerators and encoders was highly considered in the conduct of the actual data gathering and tabulation.

**II.    REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

A cursory review of related literature helped in conceptualizing the study problem and its analytical framework. Perceptions of social administrators on technical assistance vary from forms, types, focus, events and logistical support. Dissecting these may help in the assessment of DSWD's technical assistance from the perspective of the LSWDOs as well as in determining professional and personal needs of these local social welfare administrators.

## B. Legal Mandates

1. Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, transfers the responsibility for the delivery of basic services and other related facilities from the national agencies concerned to the local government units.  It also promotes the establishment and operation of peoples' organizations and non-government organizations to become partners in the pursuit of local autonomy through joint ventures and other cooperative arrangements in the delivery of basic services to enhance the economic and social well-being of the people.

2. Section 17 of the Local Government Code of 1991 states that the basic services and facilities devolved by the national DSWD are programs/services on the welfare and development of the child and youth, family and community, women, the elderly and disabled persons; community based rehabilitation programs for mendicants/street children, juvenile delinquents, strandees, abandoned and neglected and other pro-poor projects; nutrition services; and family planning services.

3. Executive Order No.15, series of 1998 entitled "Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare" mandates the DSWD to provide assistance to local government units (LGUs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), other National Government Agencies (NGAs), People's Organization (POs) and other members of civil society in effectively implementing programs, projects and services that will alleviate poverty and empower disadvantaged individuals, families and communities for an improved quality of life.

## B. PRINCIPLES

*The following principles were culled from "Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles". The document was approved at the General Meetings of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Adelaide, Australia, October 2004. This set of principles guides this study in conceptualizing technical assistance-seeking behaviour of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers as it explores on the perceptions of LSWDOs on the usefulness of DSWD as professional technical service provider .*
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**1. Human Rights and Human Dignity**

Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and the rights that follow from this. Social workers should uphold and defend each person's physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual integrity and well-being. This means:

1. Respecting the right to self-determination - Social workers should respect and promote people's right to make their own choices and decisions, irrespective of their values and life choices, provided this does not threaten the rights and legitimate interests of others.

2. Promoting the right to participation - Social workers should promote the full involvement and participation of people using their services in ways that enable them to be empowered in all aspects of decisions and actions affecting their lives.

3. Treating each person as a whole - Social workers should be concerned with the whole person, within the family, community, societal and natural environments, and should seek to recognise all aspects of a person's life.
4. Identifying and developing strengths – Social workers should focus on the strengths of all individuals, groups and communities and thus promote their empowerment.

### 2. Social Justice

Social workers have a responsibility to promote social justice, in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work. This means:

1. Challenging negative discrimination* - Social workers have a responsibility to challenge negative discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as ability, age, culture, gender or sex, marital status, socio-economic status, political opinions, skin colour, racial or other physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs.

*In some countries the term "discrimination" would be used instead of "negative discrimination". The word negative is used here because in some countries the term "positive discrimination" is also used. Positive discrimination is also known as "affirmative action". Positive discrimination or affirmative action means positive steps taken to redress the effects of historical discrimination against the groups named in clause 2.1 above.

2_ – Social workers should recognise and respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the societies in which they practise, taking account of individual, family, group and community differences.

3. Distributing resources equitably – Social workers should ensure that resources at their disposal are distributed fairly, according to need.

4. Challenging unjust policies and practices – Social workers have a duty to bring to the attention of their employers, policy makers, politicians and the general public situations where resources are inadequate or where distribution of resources, policies and practices are oppressive, unfair or harmful.

5. Working in solidarity - Social workers have an obligation to challenge social

conditions that contribute to social exclusion, stigmatisation or subjugation, and to work towards an inclusive society.

## 3. Professional conduct

Social workers should act in accordance with the ethical code or guidelines current in the country. The following general guidelines on professional conduct apply:

1. Social workers are expected to develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do their job.

2. Social workers should not allow their skills to be used for inhumane purposes, such as torture or terrorism.

3. Social workers should act with integrity. This includes not abusing the relationship of trust with the people using their services, recognising the boundaries between personal and professional life, and not abusing their position for personal benefit or gain.

4. Social workers should act in relation to the people using their services with compassion, empathy and care.

5. Social workers should not subordinate the needs or interests of people who use their services to their own needs or interests.

6. Social workers have a duty to take necessary steps to care for themselves professionally and personally in the workplace and in society, in order to ensure that they are able to provide appropriate services.

7. Social workers should maintain confidentiality regarding information about people who use their services. Exceptions to this may only be justified on the basis of a greater ethical requirement (such as the preservation of life).

8. Social workers need to acknowledge that they are accountable for their actions to the users of their services, the people they work with, their colleagues, their employers, the professional association and to the law, and that these accountabilities may conflict Social.

9. Social workers should be willing to collaborate with the schools of social work in order to support social work students to get practical training of good quality and up to date practical knowledge

10. .Social workers should foster and engage in ethical debate with their colleagues and employers and take responsibility for making ethically informed decisions

11. Social workers should be prepared to state the reasons for their decisions based on ethical considerations, and be accountable for their choices and actions.

12. Social workers should work to create conditions in employing agencies and in their countries where the principles of this statement and those of their own national code (if applicable) are discussed, evaluated and upheld.

## C. PROFESSIONAL SELF- ESTEEM - SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR

Dissecting perceptions and images of social work and social workers helps in approximating the technical assistance-seeking behavior of LSWDOs. An article Time for a Change - The Social Work Image Campaign b*y* Kate Jackson published in *Social Work Today*, Vol. 4 No. 3 p 12 (worldwide web, 2007) specifically illustrates social workers' behaviors on projecting themselves: Lack of Professional Self-Esteem. Part of the willingness to go by names other than social worker is connected to an issue of low professional self-esteem. Social workers themselves have confounded the issue and through their own behaviors have fostered an identity crisis. Another way in which social workers encourage confusion about their roles is by failing to properly identify themselves or the nature of their services.

The profession, Melendez (in Jackson, worldwide web, 2007) suggests, devalues some of the wonderful things about what makes it a discipline that is distinct from other disciplines. "We act as if our stuff isn't good enough in that way," he remarks.

Professional self-esteem may influence the LSWDOs in seeking technical assistance from DSWD. Issues relevant to self-defeating behavior of LSWDOs need to be examined as they tend to explain aspects of technical assistance-seeking behavior.

## D. What does the American public currently think of social workers?

In January-April 2004, NASW worked with Crosby Marketing Communications to come up with a campaign development—public opinion research. It conducted focus group discussions of social workers and average citizens in three cities: Anaheim CA , Atlanta GA and Baltimore MD. It was found that the general public holds social workers in higher esteem than initially thought. Observations pointed the intense pressures social workers face in their difficult work and that most are underpaid. In general, social workers are viewed as valuable to society.

Interestingly, most people in the focus groups did not understand how diverse the social work field is and that social workers are highly trained to do this complex work. Few middle-class Americans believe that they, or their families, will ever need the assistance of a social worker. Social workers are perceived to be employed in child welfare departments and other government agencies

that only assist disadvantaged families. The general perception is that social work services are limited to those in dire circumstances—and few people want to think about being in these situations (Worldwide web, February 28, 2008).

**E. Perception of Risk Among Child Protection Workers**

In 2003 Sullivan, et al (World Wide Web February 28, 2008) indicated that child protection workers with different levels of experiences do not differ in their perceptions of risk and in their decisions with regards to managing risk in the community. Implications for case management and social work training were discussed.

**F. Perceptions of State Child Care Administrators on Contracted Technical Assistance by ACF, Child Care Bureau on Quality Child Care**

Format, Focus and Logistical Support to Technical Assistance are the elements of a study on the perceptions of technical assistance for the State Child Care Administrators in Kansas, USA. The most beneficial among the technical assistance events identified by the study participants are the national conferences and small regional meetings as they provided opportunities for networking and exchange of ideas among the Administrators (World Wide Web, February 28, 2008).  Sharing Information and Concerns was the focus chosen as most beneficial followed by Federal Reporting. Technical assistance events are lined up according to benefits derived from them.

**G. Philippine Public Health Program Reform**

In the Health Sector Reform Agenda document of the Department of Health (199), three sets of factors were identified for the failure of priority health programs to eliminate infectious from the list of public health threats. One, capacity of the DOH to provide technical leadership over disease control programs. Two, the capacity of the DOH to coordinate implementation by a highly decentralized primary care system. And three, the way these programs were financed.

It was also cited that DOH programs overemphasized its service delivery role and have relied on building its own parallel delivery system. This resulted to a neglect in its technical leadership role in involving standard setting, program design and evaluation and disease surveillance based on scientific research.

The devolution also affected DOH priority programs as they lost authority over the primary delivery system. Program managers cannot anymore use department orders to set targets and marshal the local health facilities. Thus, a new management of tools (like better information, technical competence, and financial leverage) should be developed.

## III.  CONCEPTUAL/SYNTHESIZING FRAMEWORK
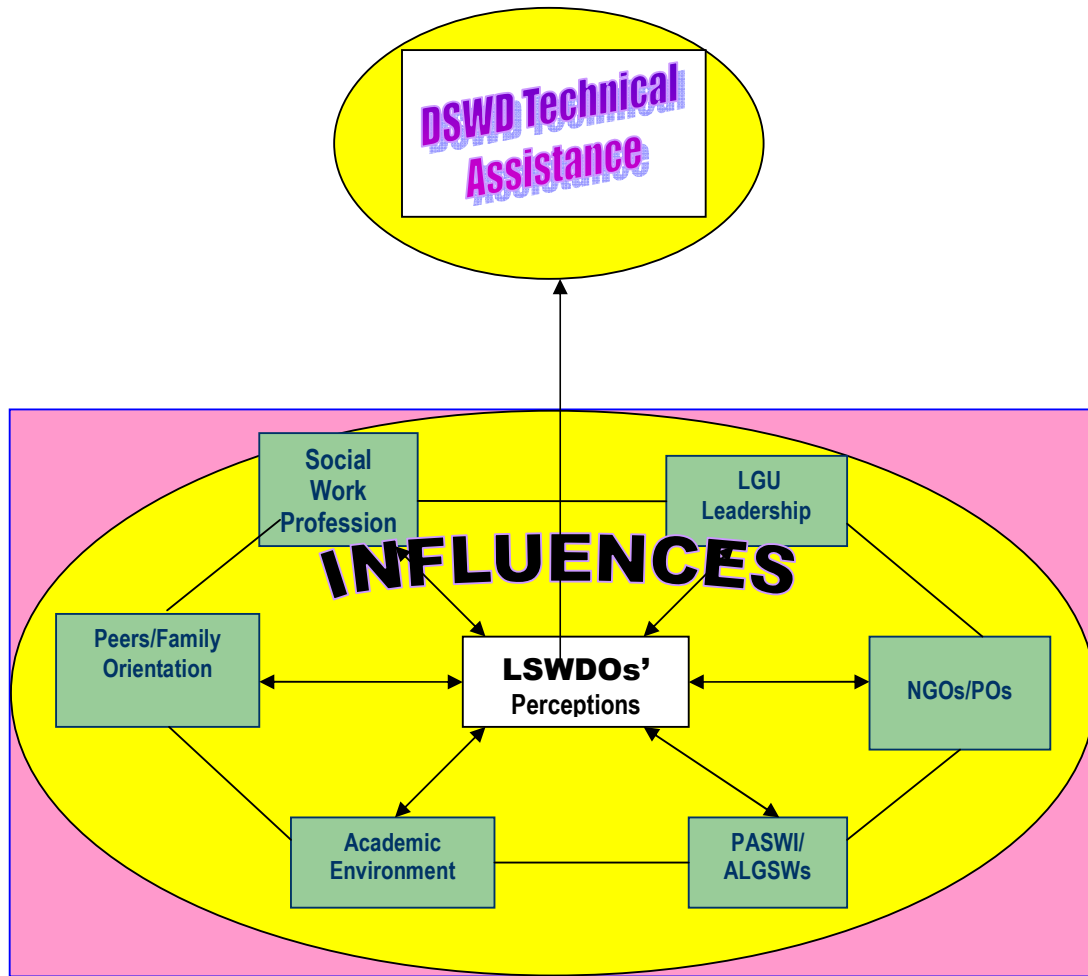


**DYNAMICS OF PERCEPTIONS OF THE LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS (LSWDOs) ON THE USEFULNESS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DSWD IN DAVAO REGION**

The synthesizing tool is based on the conceptual framework where LSWDOs' personal resources (using socio-demographic data) play a critical role in their adoption or assumption of functions and tasks as Advisers to Local Chief Executives in Social Welfare and Development sectoral planning and programming.  Sources of influence may include the social work profession itself, LGU leadership, NGOs/POs; Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc.(PASWI)/Association of Local Social Welfare and Development Workers (ALSWDW); and Family, Peers. These influences may in turn, affect their perceptions about DSWD's technical assistance in their growth and development as Local Social Welfare and Development Officers.

In this study, the logical relationships between sets of concepts were dealt with in order to make conclusions on how LSWDOs perceive DSWD's technical assistance.

## IV.    RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive-evaluative study which aims to gather an authentic understanding of Local Social Welfare and Development Officers' (LSWDOs), experiences with DSWD on technical assistance.

### Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were the fifty-three (53) LSWDOs covering Local Government Units of Davao Region with 4 provinces, 6 Cities and 43 Municipalities. They comprise the total number of LSWDOs in the region.

### Sampling

Total enumeration of target LSWDOs of Davao Region who served the same LGU since 1992 were considered in the study.

### Data Collection

Data were collected through survey using an interview schedule citing the relevance of Technical Assistance of DSWD provided among the 53 identified interviewees. To complement and reinforce findings of the survey, Focus Group Discussion was intended to initiate an in-depth sharing by the representatives of the 4 provinces and 6 cities. It was however facilitated like a workshop with meta cards, a swing to the original design- objectives and process behind FGD.

### DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical works were undertaken for the data from the survey and were treated using descriptive statistics. Statistical test was undertaken to explore on the hypothesis.  For data from the Focus Group Discussions (FGD), the trend analysis and triangulation of data were employed.

Interview transcriptions were reviewed before coding began. Each category of responses were coded and classified under themes.

Themes common among Local Social Welfare and Development Officers within the province and across provinces and municipalities were taken up and were validated.


### ETHICS, INFORMATION, OUTCOME AND RESOURCES

It involves the principle of autonomy/self-determination where the researcher must provide information about the nature and purpose of the study and get the respondents' consent to take part in the research. It should have an informed consent to participate in the study.

Other related important issues to consider are by keeping the study participants' anonymity and by observing privacy and confidentiality throughout the research process. In the case of this study with a relatively small sample, the confidentiality in reporting can be observed by using general term. This plan shall be part of the researcher's responsibility in ascertaining individual's right to privacy.

Likewise, each respondent shall be assured of getting feedback on the outcome of the research prior to the final report especially if the result shall be submitted to DSWD Central Office or recommended for publication. Whatever data or information gathered shall be kept for five years in case of verification of the research being done or counterchecking of interview results.


## Definition of Terms

Local Social Welfare and Development Officers are those workers transferred to the Local SWD Office in 1992 by virtue of the devolution under the Local Government Code and still working with the same Office up to now.

Perceptions  - are levels of the LSWDOs' satisfaction on the usefulness of DSWD's Technical Assistance as measured in but not limited to the following:

1. Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment)
2. Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring (social welfare and development standards check and review)
3. Services and Technical Assistance to Intermediaries (Professional self-esteem Development and Complementation/Augmentation of Direct Services (Center and Community-based)
4. Services to Center and Community-Based Clients
5. Technical and organizational skills and know-how imparted to local government units, other agencies or organizations, groups or individuals with the end goal of strengthening human and institutional capacities as partners in addressing social welfare and development (SWD) issues/concerns in their respective localities.

### Satisfaction Levels

Level 1 – **Satisfaction** of LSWDO is strong only on one (1) specific DSWD technical function (e.g. Only on Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment.)

Level 2 – **Satisfaction** of LSWDO is strong on at least two (2) DSWD technical functions (e.g. Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment) and Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring (social welfare and development standards check and review).

Level 3 – **Satisfaction** of LSWDO is strong on three (3) DSWD technical functions: 1.    Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment)2. Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring (social welfare and development standards check and review)3. Services and Technical Assistance to Intermediaries (Professional self-esteem Development and Complementation/Augmentation of Direct Services (Center and Community-based)

**V. Data Presentation**

# RESPONDENTS:
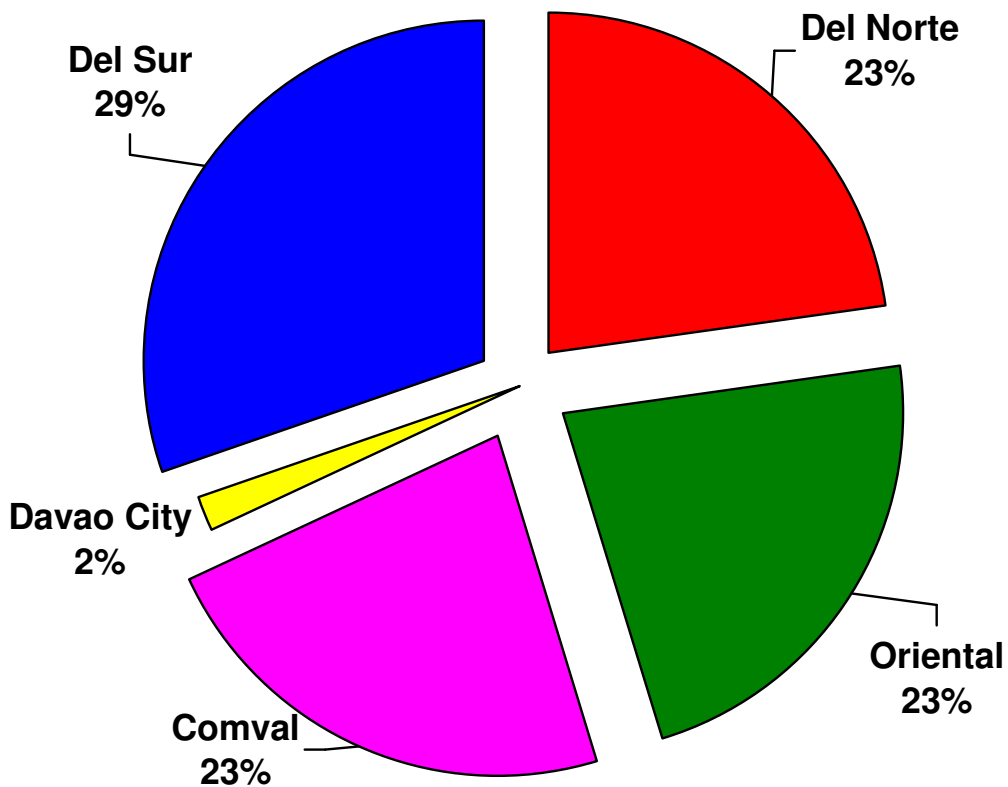


The survey was comprised of 53 respondents coming from different cities/provinces of Region XI's-Social Welfare and Development Offices who assumed key post.  The most numbered respondents came from LSWDO Davao Del Sur which has 16 LGUs and had a total share of 29%.  Consequently, remaining provinces such as LSWDO Davao del Norte, LSWDO Davao Oriental and LSWDO  Compostela Valley had all

shared the 23% components with 12 LGUs in their respective provinces. And the least was from LSWDO Davao City covering 2% with 1 main office. There were also 5 cities (Cities of Davao, Panabo, Tagum, Mati and Digos) involved in this study coming also from different provinces aforementioned.

# PART I. SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1) Professional Social Work Background
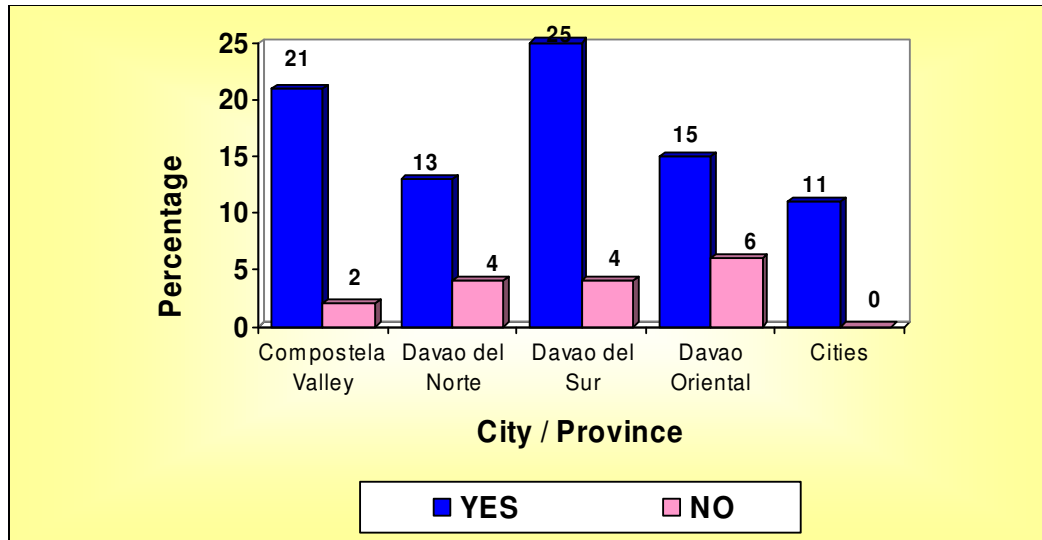


Based on the questionnaire above, the figure shows that social welfare workforce in the region appeared to be high in the affirmative side in Davao del Sur LGUs with 25% respondents that they are really indeed professional social workers, followed by those LGUs coming from Compostela Valley with 21%, while city local units on the other hand got the least with only 11% of the total population being surveyed. On the negative aspect however the highest position who admitted a "No" response is from the LGUs of Davao Oriental with 6% and O% coming from the city components.

2) Place of Residence
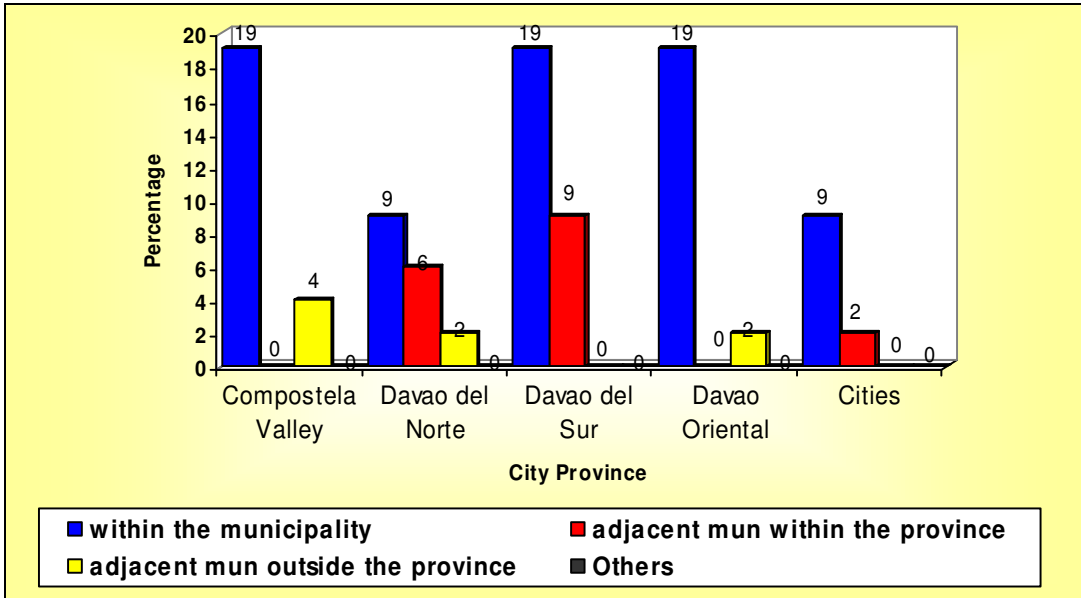
Three provinces with their respective LGUs (Compostela Valley, Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental) have the same share of 19% among the social workers who live just within the municipal/provincial vicinity. There are quite a number of social workers whose place of work is adjacent their locality but still within the province. Among them mostly come from LGUs of Davao del Sur with 9% and 0% to the component Cities.  Nevertheless, there are still some LSWDOs who live far from their place of work adjacent to their municipality and outside the province and prominent zone of this were some LSWDOs coming from Compostela Valley.

3)  Highest Professional Education
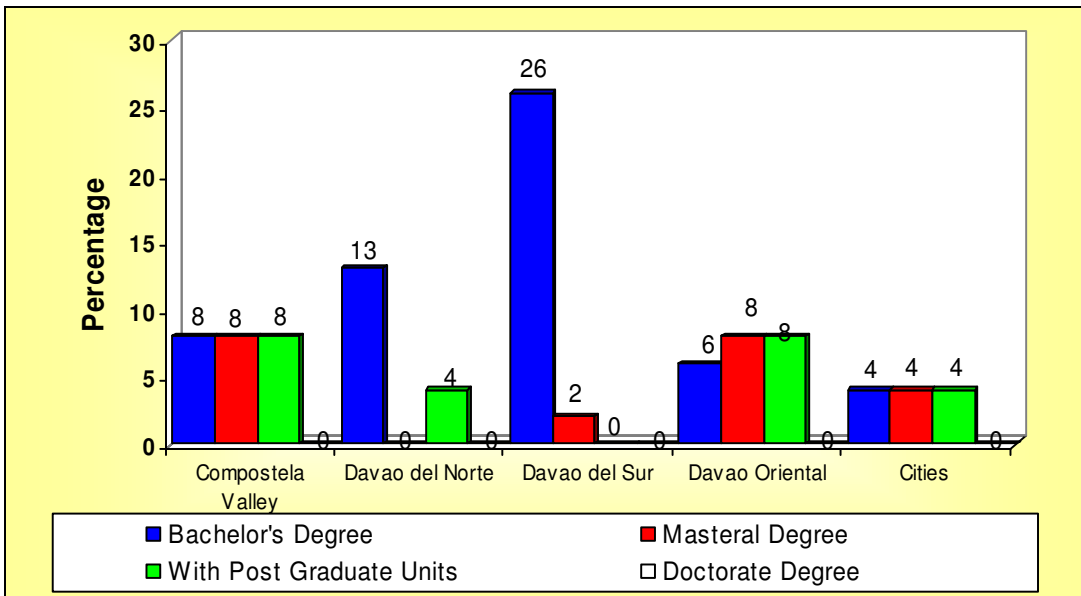


As to the educational attainment, the figure shown above indicates that Davao del Sur and its LGU components lead in accomplishing the Bachelor's Degree with 26% outcome, seconded by Davao del Norte with 13% of the same educational degree. But it is remarkable to note that there are quite a number of LSWDOs who also prefer

to pursue higher level of education through earning Master's Degree or graduate units that is visibly seen in some LGUs of Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental with 8%.

***Note: "Post graduate unit" was taken to mean Master unit or graduate unit when verified in an informal validation process.***

4) Period of Upgrading Formal Education
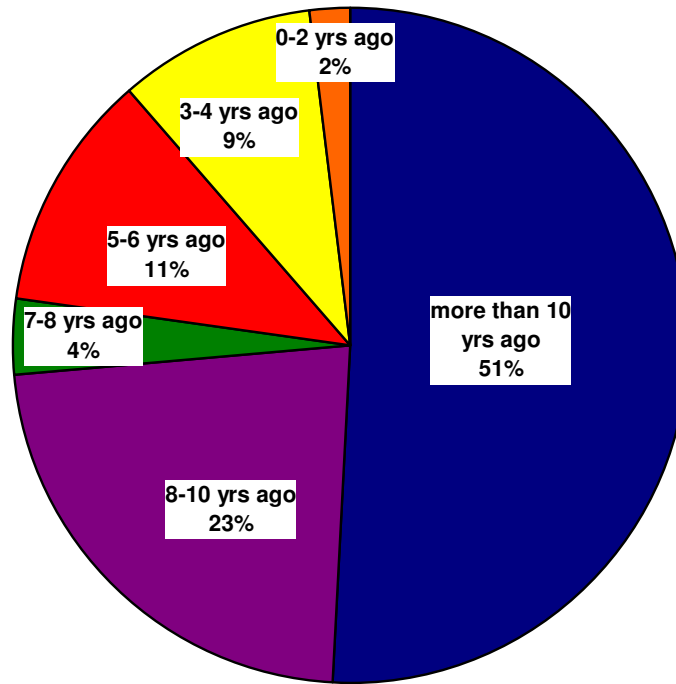


On achieving higher education, social workers recognize their inability to upgrade their professional education. The chart above indicates that more than half (51%) of the total social workers have not attended or updated their formal education more than 10 years ago, succeeded by 23% of the total pie share of those who attended school 8-10 years ago and only 2% of respondents declared recent attendance to educational study 0-2 years.

5) Sex
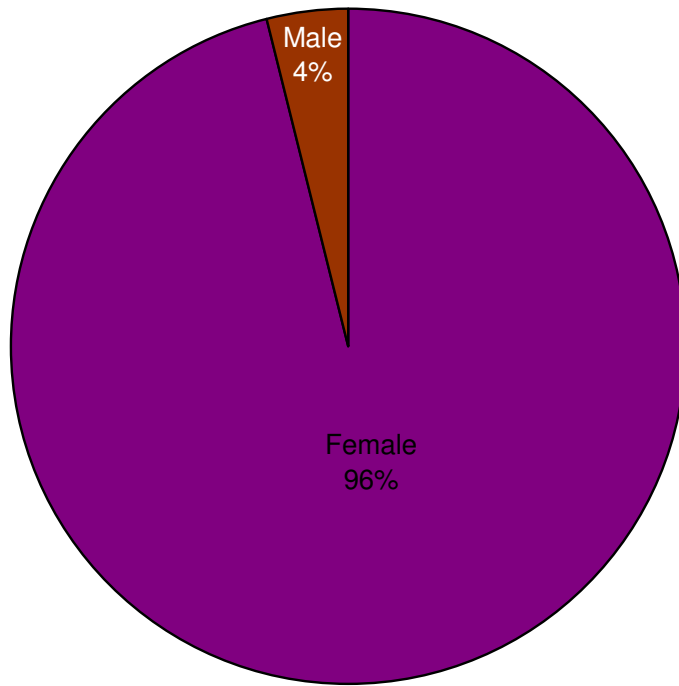
As social service is associated to females and Region XI is no exception, social work practice is still dominated by the women population, with 96% coverage of the total pie chart, and the remaining 4% are males coming from Davao Oriental and Sta. Maria of Davao del Sur.

6) Age
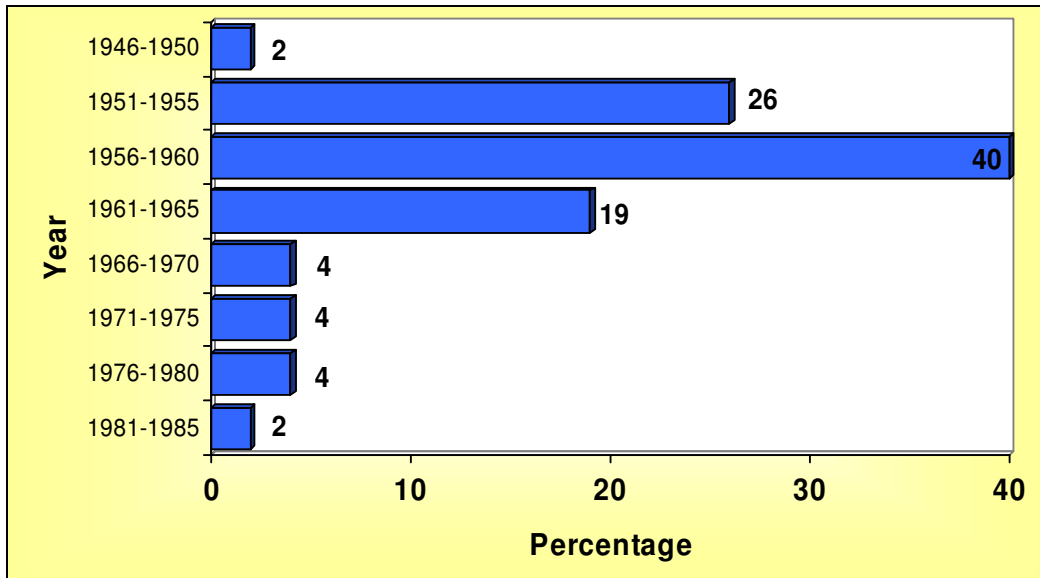
This study also reveals the different ages of the Social Workers and the graph shows that 40% of the current social workers were born between 1956-1960 and that makes them 48-52 years of age bracket, followed by 26% who were born under 1951-1955 aging from 53-57 age bracket and those having born between 1946-1950 and 1981-1985 are found to be the least.

7) Marital Status
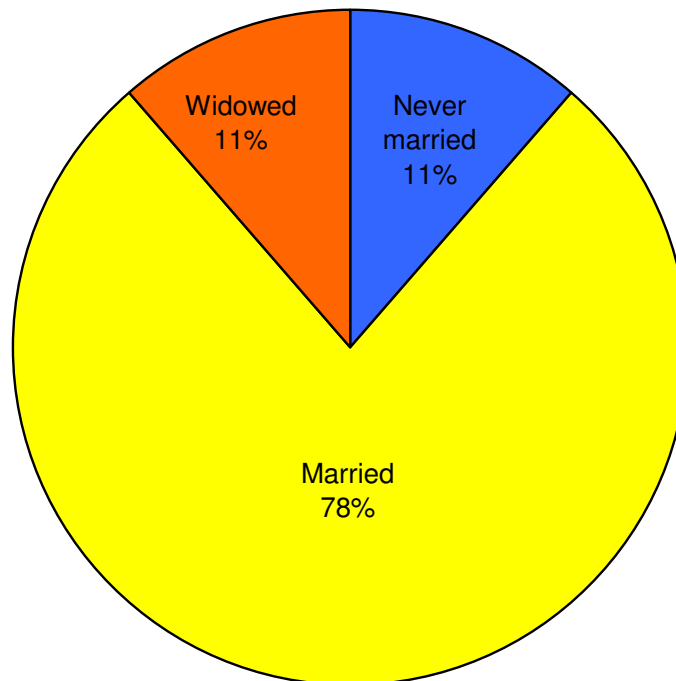


Current Marital Status is also an important indicator of this study, though being single is an advantage.  For this part, being married gets the highest mark with 78% among its total share and it is good to know that 11% of the respondents are single and never married same with that widowed status.

8) Length of Service Prior To Devolution
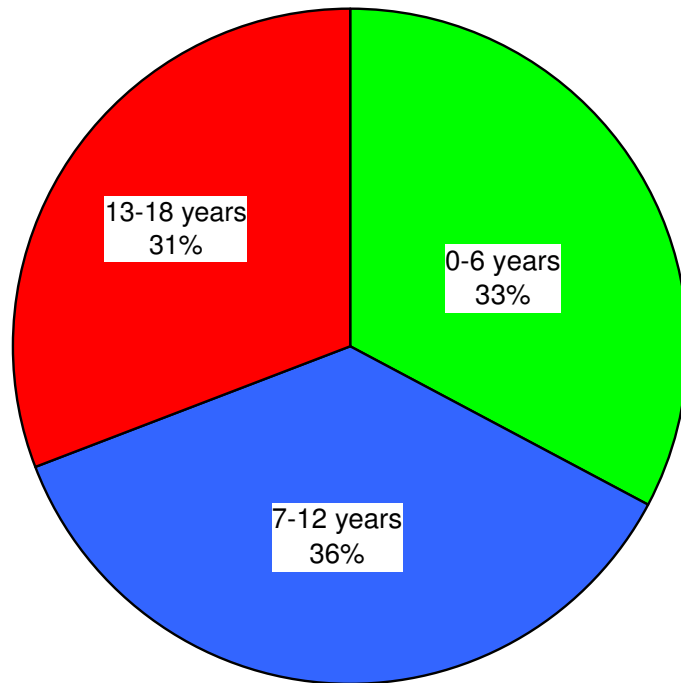
Prior to devolution, social workers were already working with the government, Majority of the respondents (36%) belong to the 7-12 years bracket, however, 33% responded for enduring the 0-6 years and lastly, 31% took hold in surviving 13-18 years.

9) Nature and Status As LSWDO
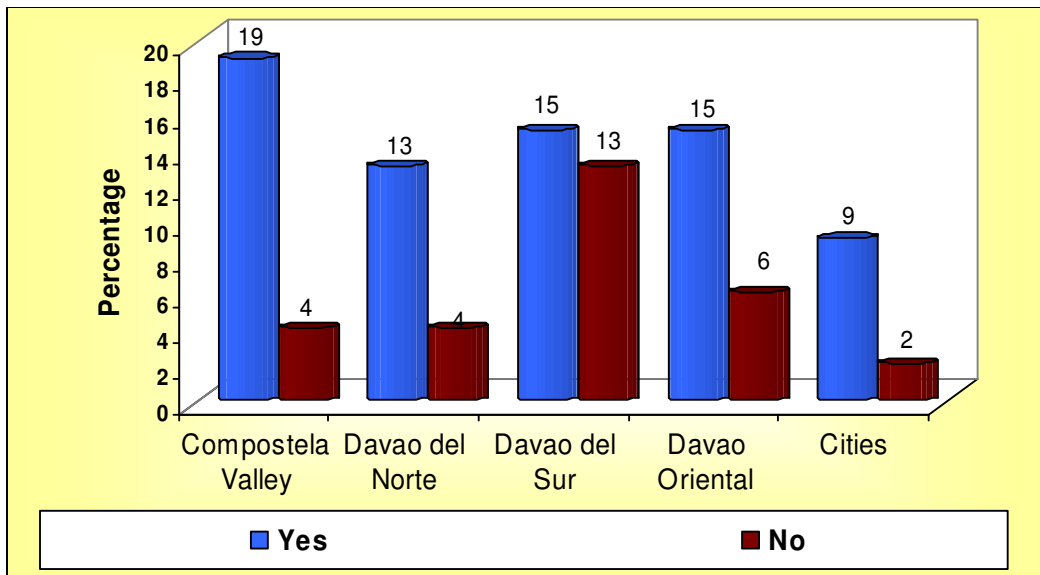
The survey result shows that most of the LSWDOs of Compostela Valley were already full-pledged Department Head having a total of 19% respondents, followed by those LSWDO coming from Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental with 15% correspondingly, while the LGUs of the City components disclosed with 9% respondents having the least. Furthermore, it also appeared that some LSWDOs in the Davao del Sur also claimed that 13% of them are not yet a Department Head holder and 2%.of the city components claim the same.

10) Period of Acquisition of Post
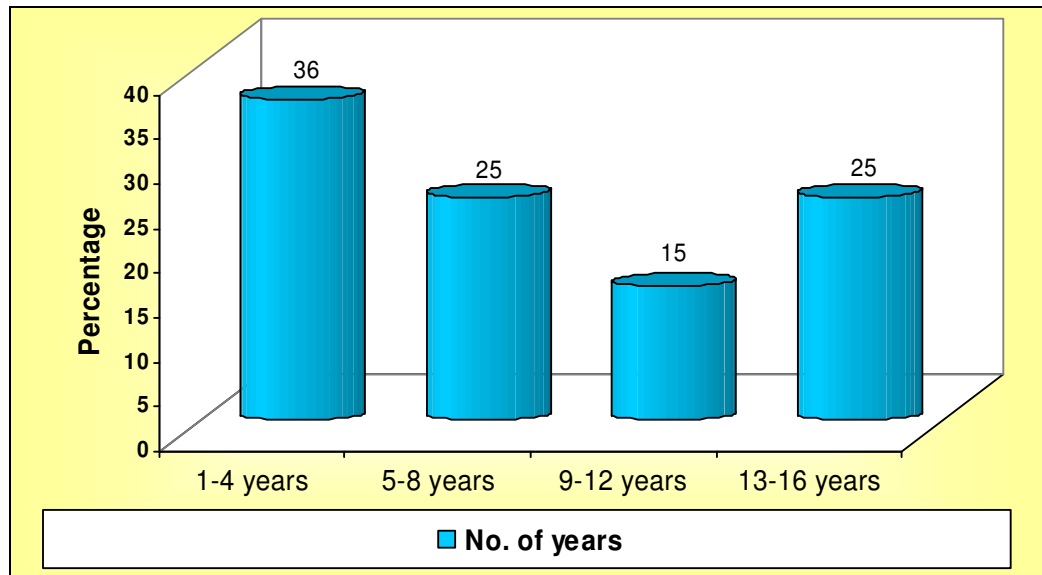


Many of the LSWDOs have long been battling to get the permanent position status and it is quite noteworthy that amid those circumstances they have finally taken the item. Achieving a regular status are 36% of the LSWDOs, that after 1-4 years their position has come to be ultimately in place. The remaining 25% has been divided particularly to 5-8 years and 13-15 years of waiting, and lastly those who waited for 9-12 years were only 16% of the total LSWDOs.
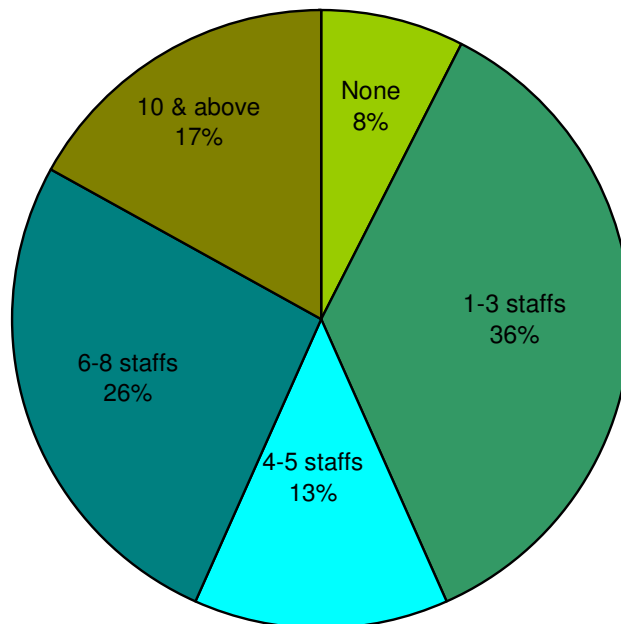
# PART II.  WORKING ENVIRONMENT

1)  Date of Actual Devolution of SWD Office
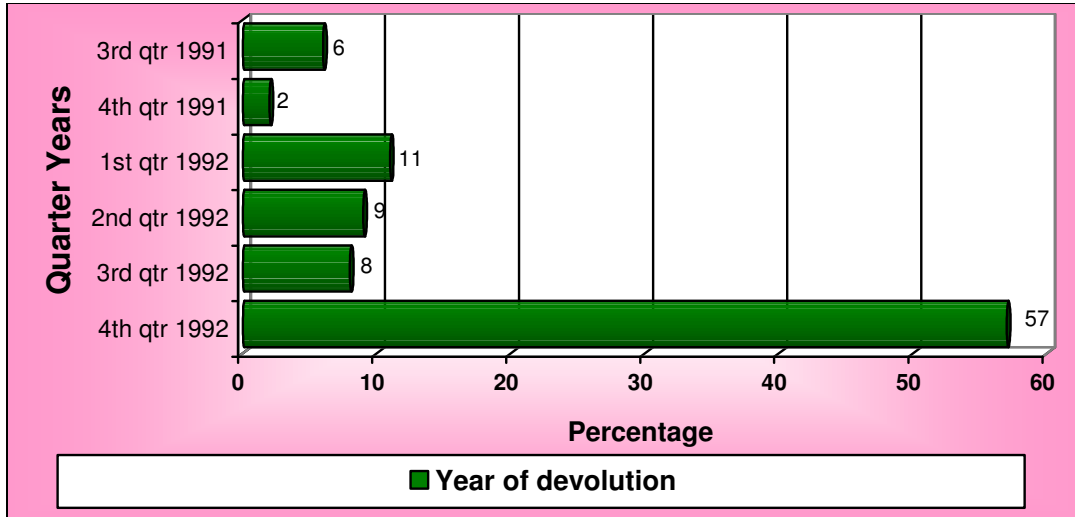


Half of the LSWDO population (57%) attained their actual devolution in place on the 4th quarter of 1992, succeeded by 11% devolved during the 1st quarter of the same year and the least is only 2% done in 4th quarter of 1991.

2)  Number of Assigned Staff to SWDO

Additional staff is very important in the Social Work Services and results of the survey shows that most (36%) of the Department Heads got only 1-3 staff designated to help and render public services to their constituents. While 26% have 6-8 staff to aid the Department Head and there are still 8% of the LSWDOs contend to do all the tasks by themselves and have no staff at all.

3) Nature and Status of Designated Office for SWD
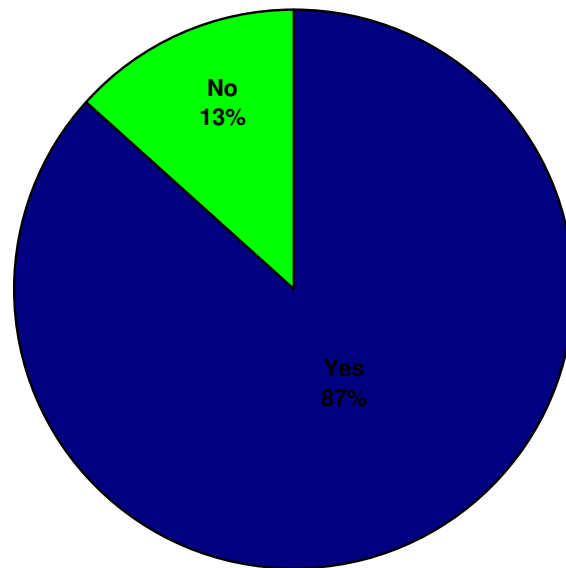


For Social Service facilities, 87% responded that SWD office exists and functioning on their own, and the remaining 13% admitted that SWD office is functioning but it is attached to other local government department or agency.

4) Equipments and Facilities
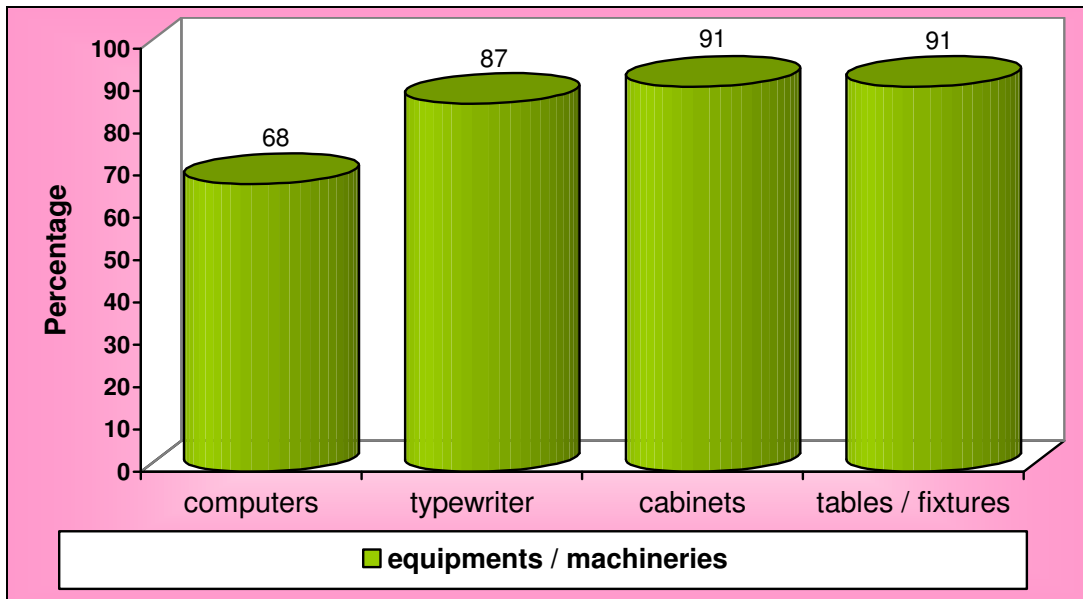
Almost all SWD offices have cabinets, tables and fixtures to work on, having 91% of the total share correspondingly at the time of devolution, 87% answered that there was an available typewriter to work on the documents and the 68% were lucky enough to have an existing computer for easier retrieval and documents preparations. A consultation with DSWD FO-XI personnle however revealed that there were a handful of SWD offices that received transport vehicles and other small office stuffs during the turnover.

5) Current Number of Staff
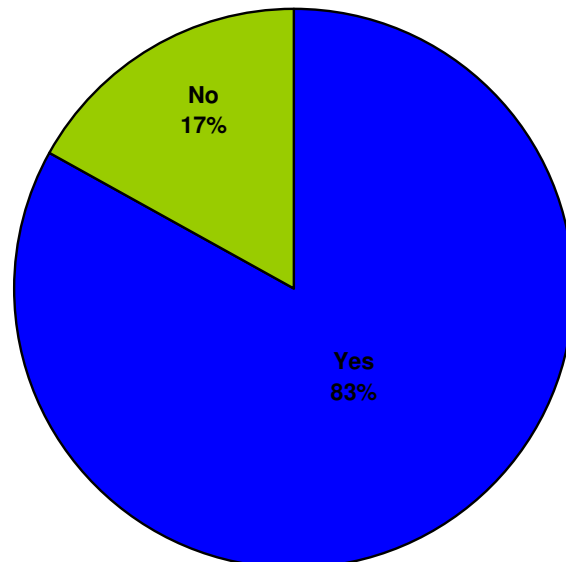


After devolution, it is expected to have great changes on social services and among of which are the human power supplement for better social service delivery, 83% replied affirmatively that they have an increased number of staff complement on their respective offices, but it is poignant that there are still existing LGUs comprised of 17% that filling-up of human power remains to be vague.

# PART III.  PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

1.  Professional Self Image
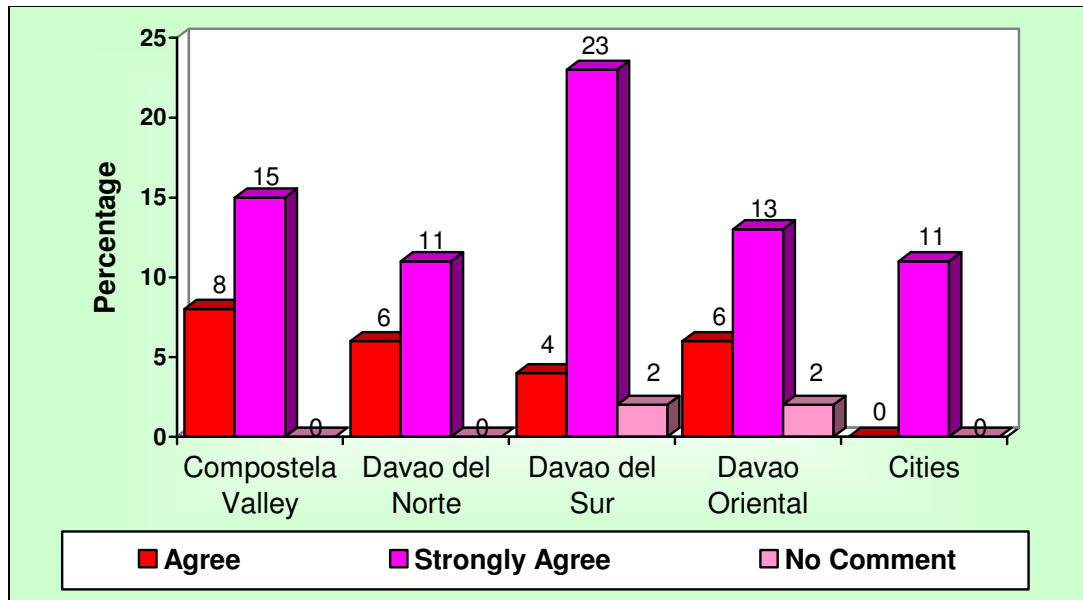


LSWDOs from Davao del Norte get the highest mark of 23% on the principal subject of strongly agree on liking the Social Work Profession followed by those LSWDO coming from Compostela Valley with 15%, there are also some LSWDOs coming Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental who share the same views while 2% refuse to comment on the abovementioned subject.

2.  Professional Development Goals
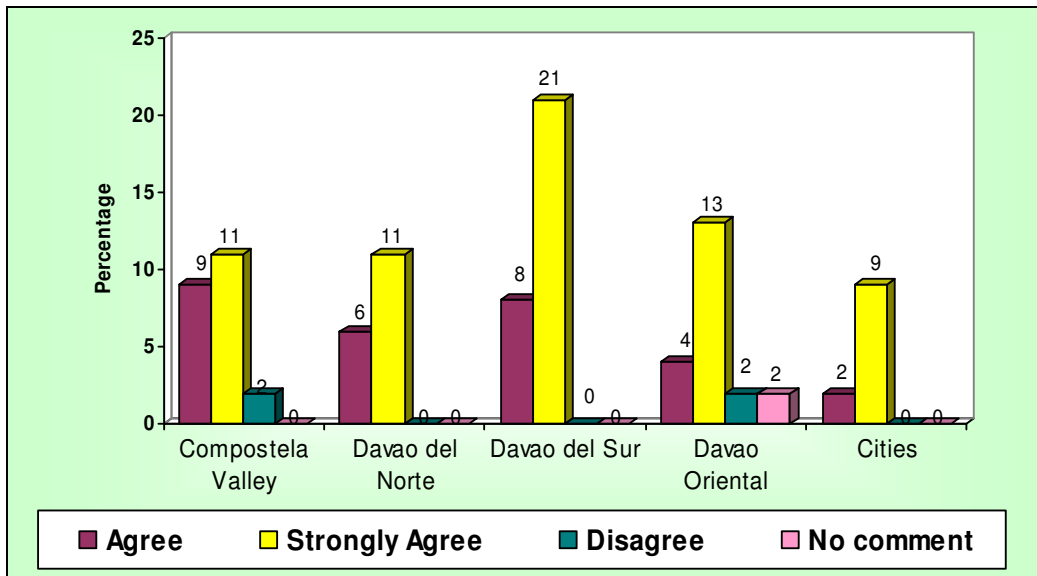
The LSWDOs of Davao del Sur maintain its stronghold principle on building professional self-image with assumption of 21% on "Strongly Agree" on setting professional development goals, with the concurrence (13%) of Davao Oriental and its LGU components. It is ironic that there are still LSWDOs on the same province that ascertain their "No comment" position.


3.  Professional Self Development Program
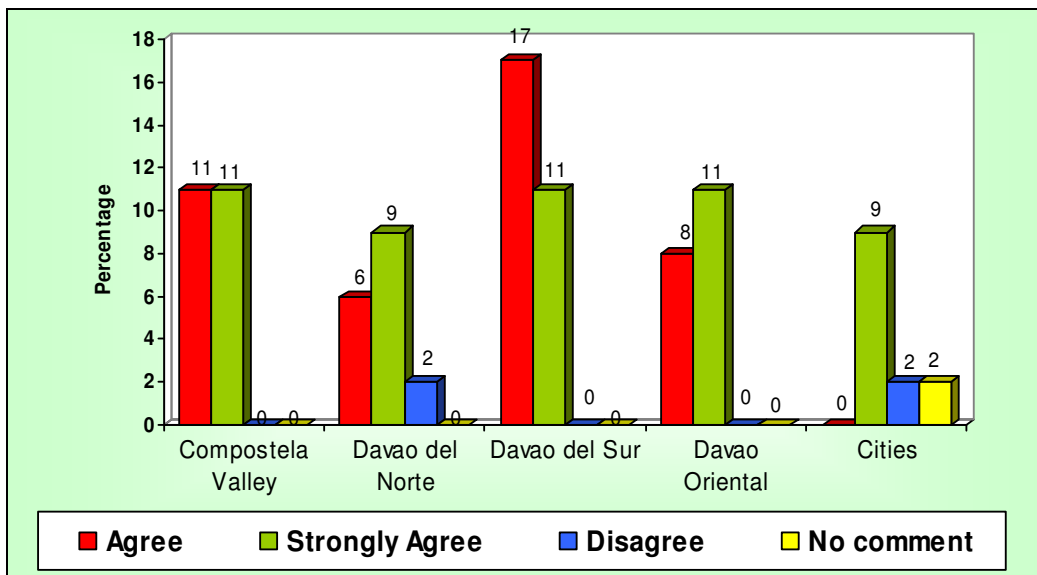


For "Strongly Agree" correlated to self development program associated with professional goals, three provinces emerge, sharing the 11% highest standing consisting of Compostela Valley, Davao del sur, and Davao Oriental. The component cities mark the "No Comment" standing at 2%.

4. Social Work Peer Consultation on Professional Practice
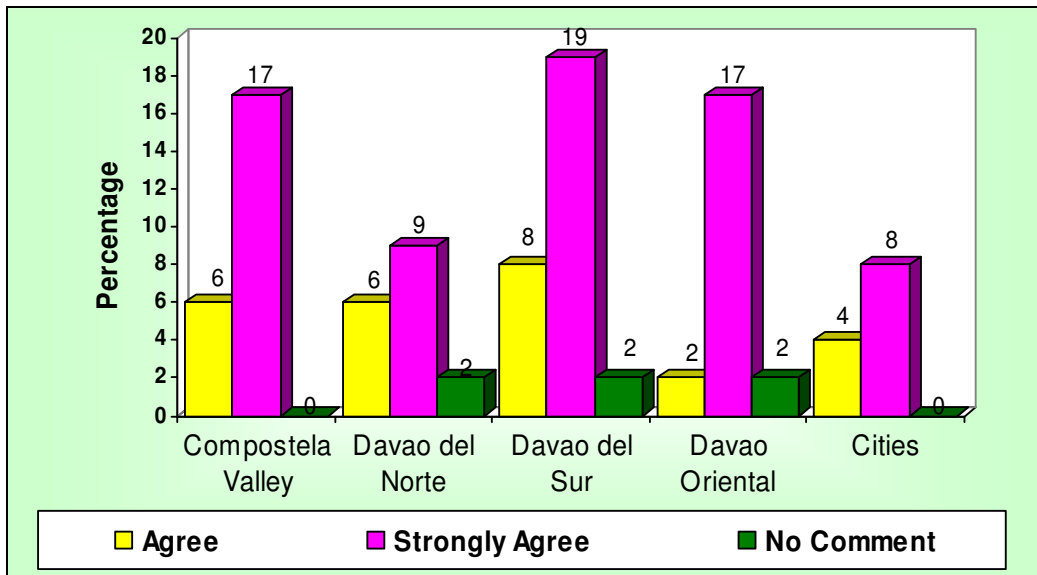


For this aspect, consultation with social work colleagues is high among LSWDOs in Davao del Sur with 19%, seconded by Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental with 17% respectively, and other LSWDOs have taken the "No comment" side. They are from Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental, with 2%.

5. LSWDOs' Technical Assistance Seeking
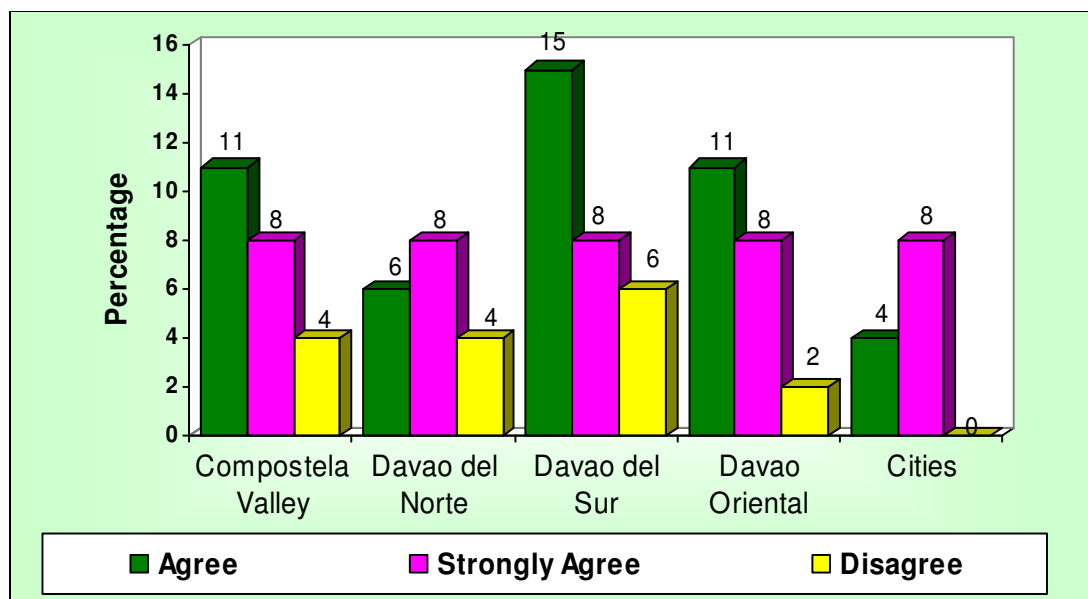
Social Worker-leaders of Region XI have a unanimous response on initiation of forum, dialogues and consultations with DSWD XI on local SWD needs and concerns with 8% respectively. But there are few also who beg to disagree on their technical assistance initiatives as expressed by Davao del Sur with a share of 6% on the negative side hinting factors such as geographical location (LGU distance from DSWD FO-XI) and communication line problem.

# PART IV.  DSWD Technical Assistance Provision
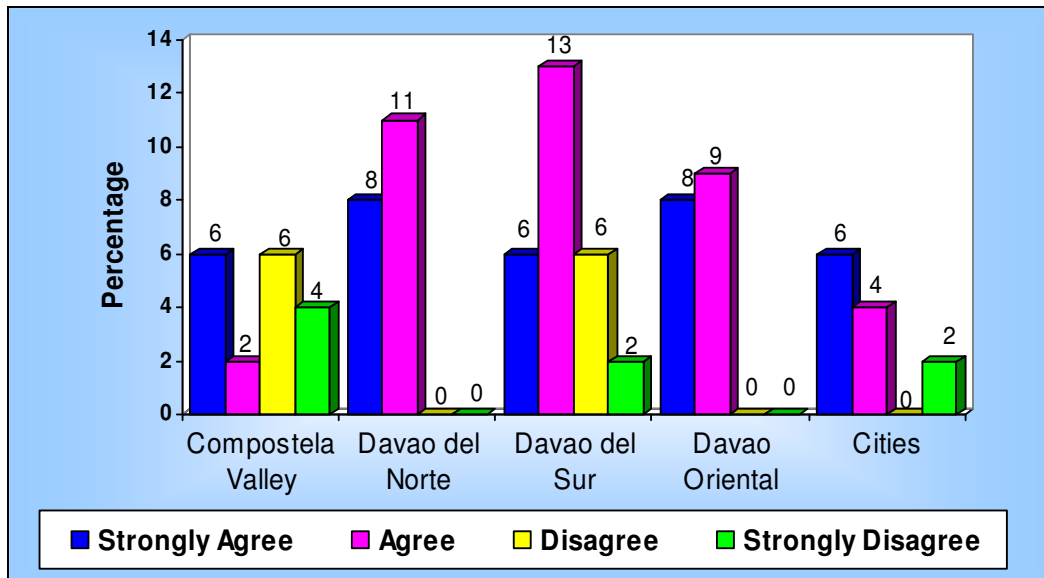# (Laws / Policy Advocacy)

1.  TA on RA 9262 (VAWC)
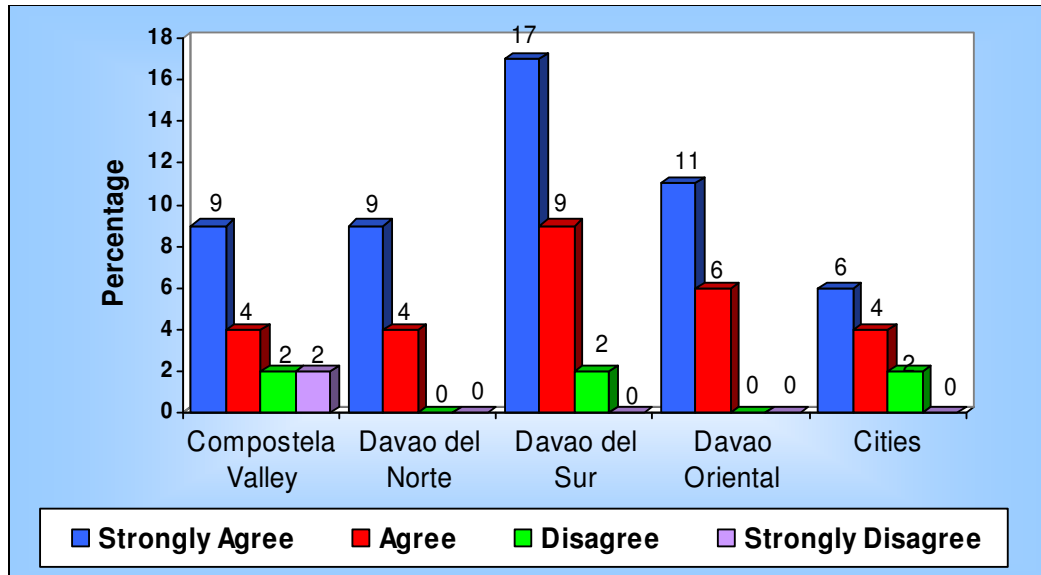


LSWDOs of Davao del Sur top the survey, with 17% saying "Strongly Agree" in supporting and believing on the DSWD TA provision relevant to Republic Act 9262 (VAWC), but other LSWDOs from Compostela Valley give their opinion of "Strongly Disagree", a 4% share of respondents.

2.  TA on RA 9208 (Trafficking in Persons)

Two provinces shared the same positive reaction, "Strongly Agree" with 8% on the DSWD TA provision relevant to RA 9208 (Trafficking in Persons) and a few LSWDO from Compostela Valley with 4% have given their views on disagreeing on the TA on the policy.

3. TA on RA 9257 (Older Persons)
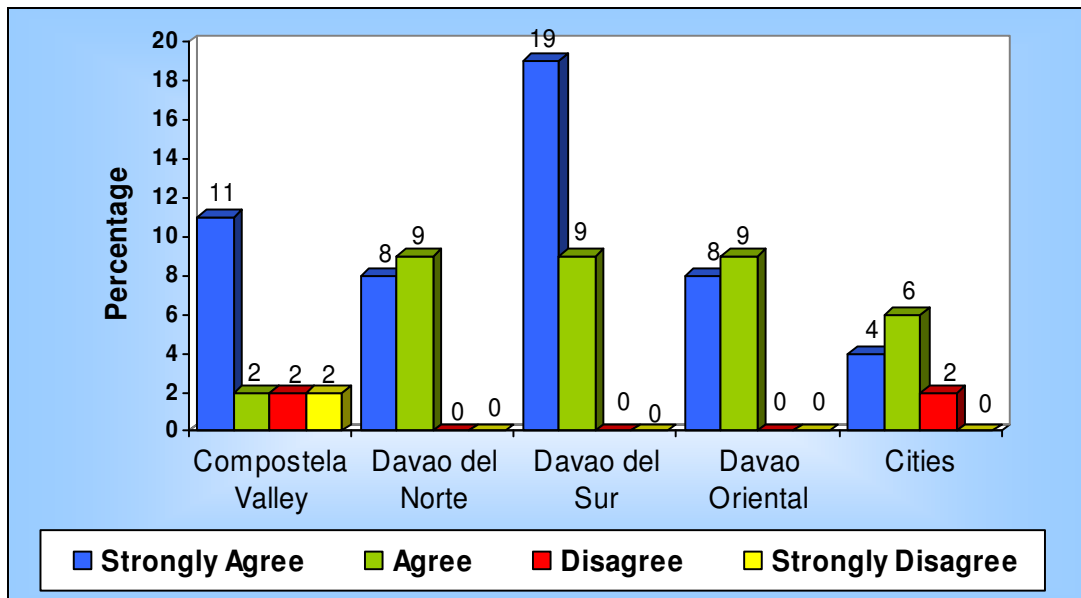


LSWDOs of Davao del Sur believe that the DSWD TA provision relevant to the policy involving Older Persons (RA9257) is of importance with the highest remark of 19% among respondents but other LSWDOs of Compostela Valley give out its strong opinion of "Strong Disagree" with 2%.

4. TA on RA 9442 (PWDs)
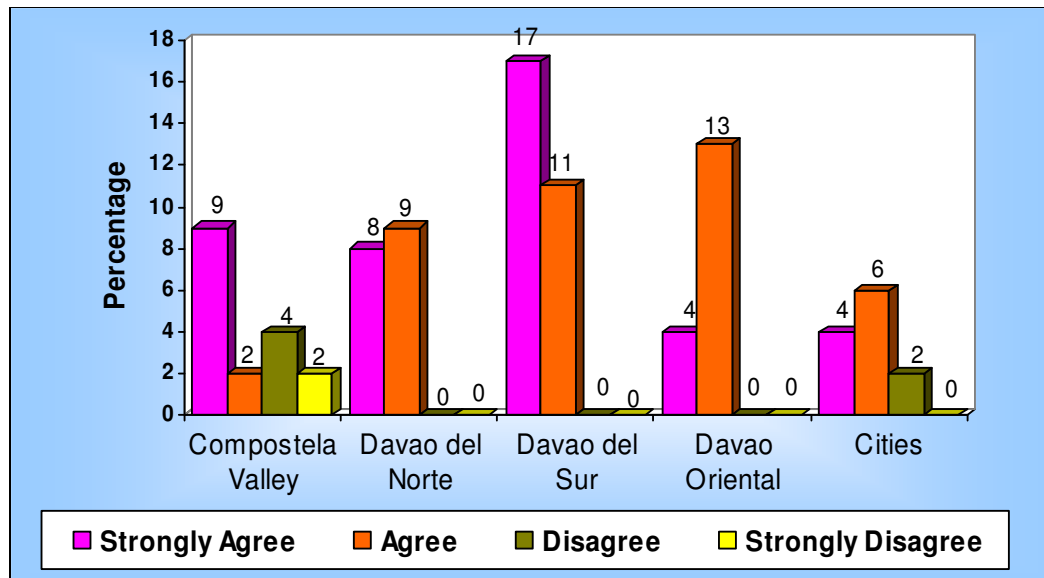


LSWDOs of Davao del Sur again top the survey with 17% respondents positively taking the DSWD TA provision relevant to RA 9442 (PWDs), followed by Compostela Valley with 9% but Comval is also incongruous to the negative side where 2% of the LSWDOs have a "Strongly Disagree" outlook.

5. TA on RA 9165 (Dangerous Drug Act)
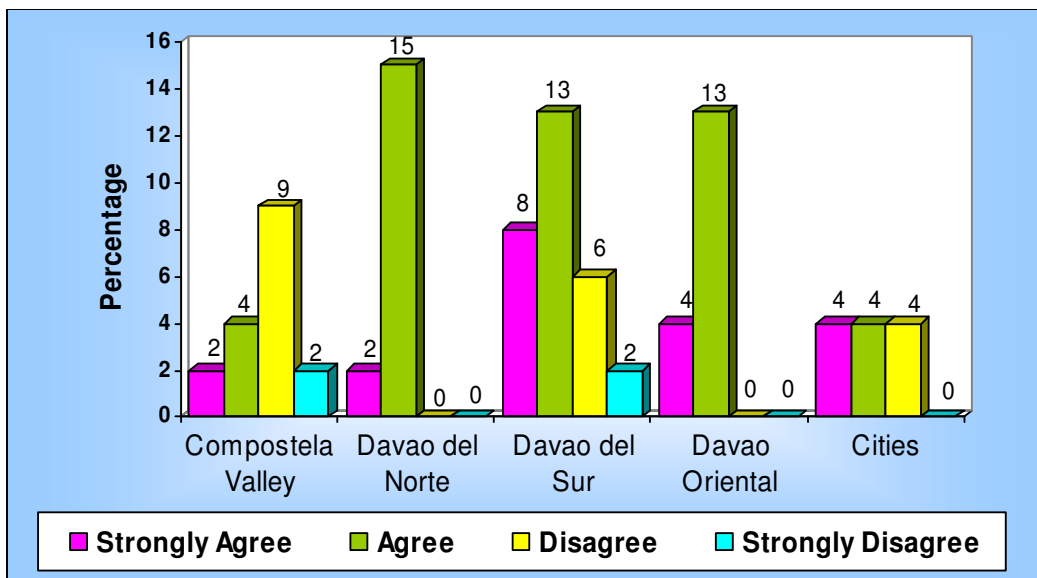
LSWDOs from the LGUs of Davao del Norte had laid their support for the DSWD TA provision relevant to RA 9165 (Dangerous Drug Act) with 15% share of respondents, seconded by Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental, and again 2% of which comes from Compostela Valley and Davao del Sur who expressed their "Strongly Disagree" position.

6. TA on PD 603 / RA 7610 (Protection of Children Against Abuse)
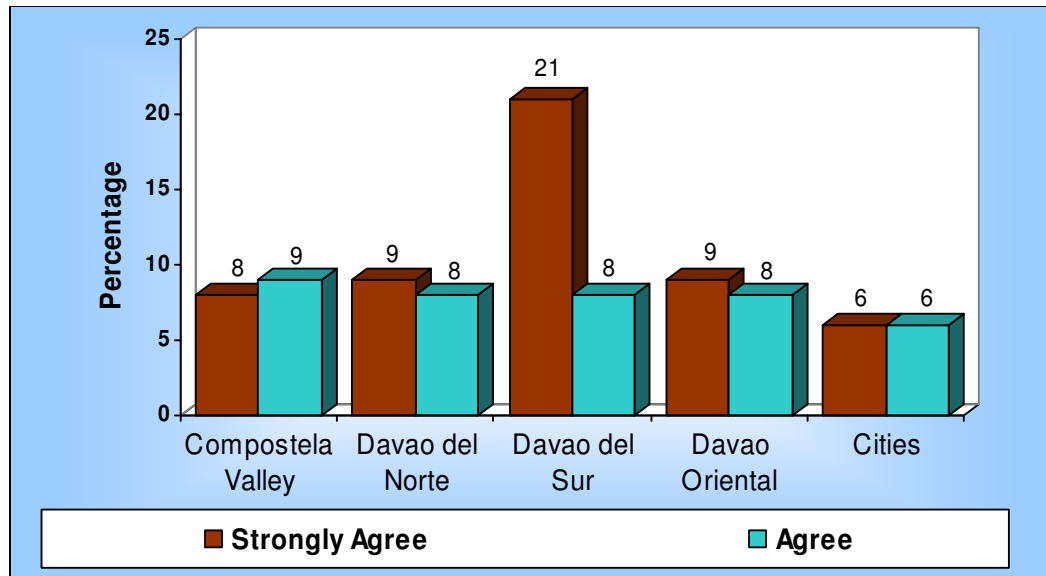


It is good to know that the "Disagree" indicator has to be eliminated for there was no figure into it. 21% is the highest mark from Davao del Sur strongly agreeing on the DSWD TA provision relevant to policy outlined in PD 603 / RA 7610 (Protection of Children Against Abuse), while the LSWDOs of component cities slightly favour, the lowest mark of 6%.

7. TA on Legislative Lobbying
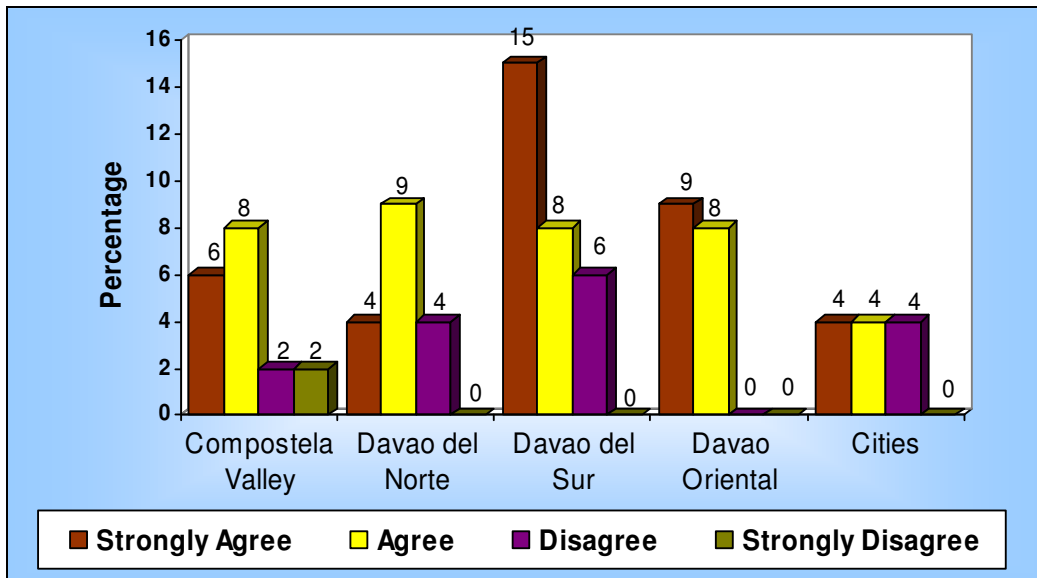
Lobbying with Local Legislators is another important indicator for social service enhancement, and LSWDOs of Davao del Sur with 15% believe in the task and registered a "Strongly Agree" response to the DSWD TA provision, while LSWDOs of Compostela Valley continue to disagree on some terms of this position with 2% response.

8. TA on Observance of Special Events
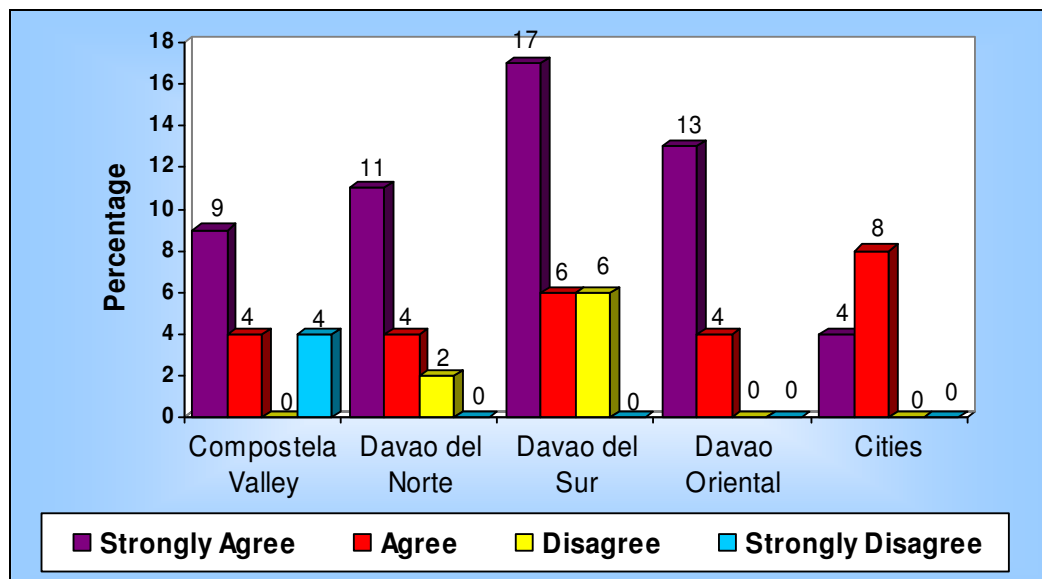


For this graph LSWDOs of Davao del Sur reach 17% of the total survey of respondents and believe to have been properly assisted by DSWD in the observance of special events, and the same province with 6% from other LGUs also had expressed doubts and disagreement on terms and condition about DSWD's support to these events.

# PART IV.  DSWD Technical Assistance Provision (Policy, Plans, Programs, Projects, Social Tech Development)

1. TA on Policy Advocacy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development.
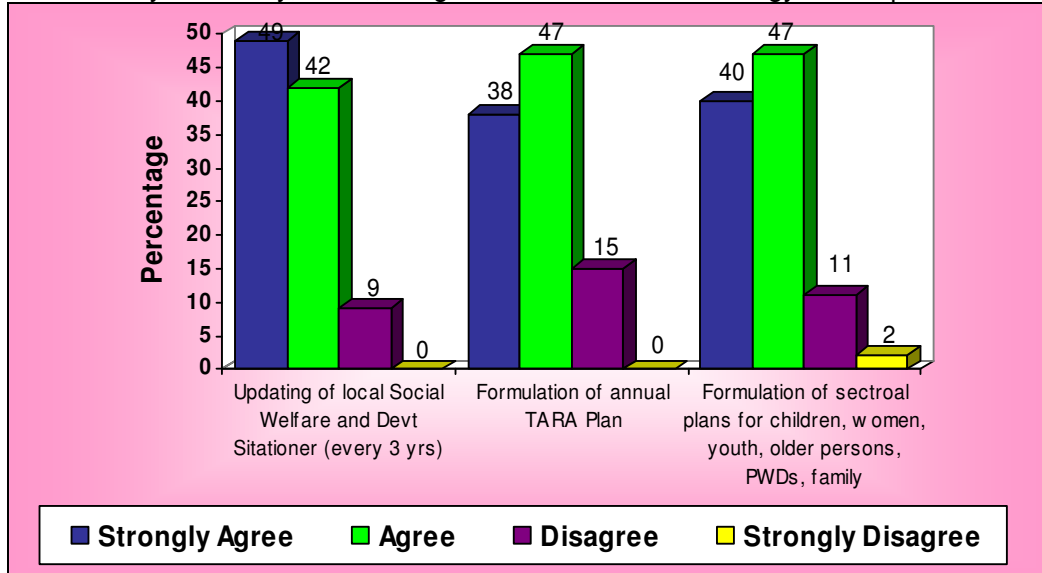


The graph shows that there is a levelling of the DSWD technical services related to the advocacy and formulation of policy, plans programs and social technology development wherein the respondents positively acted with DSWD TA on updating local social welfare and development situationer every 3 years, where almost half of the entire respondents (about 49% ) remark with strongly agree. While formulation of annual TARA plan assumes a 15% disagree position.

2. TA on Developing Programs and Projects on CHILDREN.
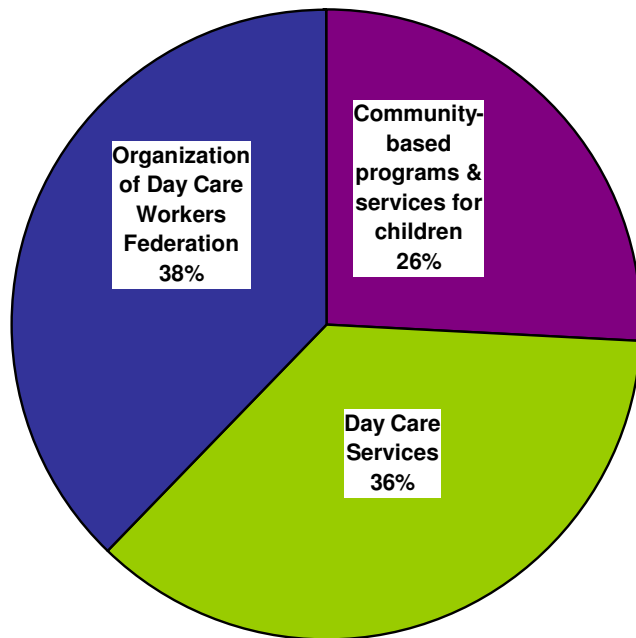
For this graph, the survey shows that the entire Region XI respondents favourably take TA of DSWD on the Organization of Day Care Workers Federation at 38%, almost same percent seriously consider the TA on Day Care Services at 36%, then followed by Community based programs and services for children at 26%.

3. TA on Developing Programs and Projects on YOUTH.
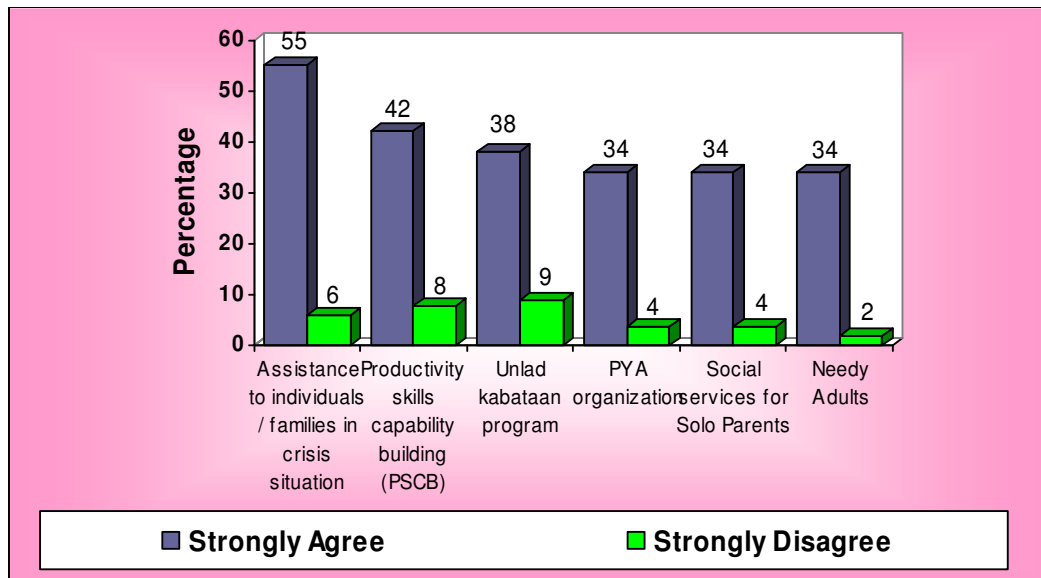


For the programs and projects intended for the youth, "Strongly Agree" component belongs to 55% of the respondents where TA's emphasis is on giving of assistance to individuals/families in crisis situation, subsequently followed by 42% on enhancing productivity skills/capability-building, on the other hand, while Unlad Kabataan registered a "Strongly Disagree" mark and has a 9% revelation opposing the kind of

TA. TA on Needy Adults garnered 2% indicating strongly disagree mark among the respondents.

4.  TA on Developing Programs and Projects on OLDER PERSONS.
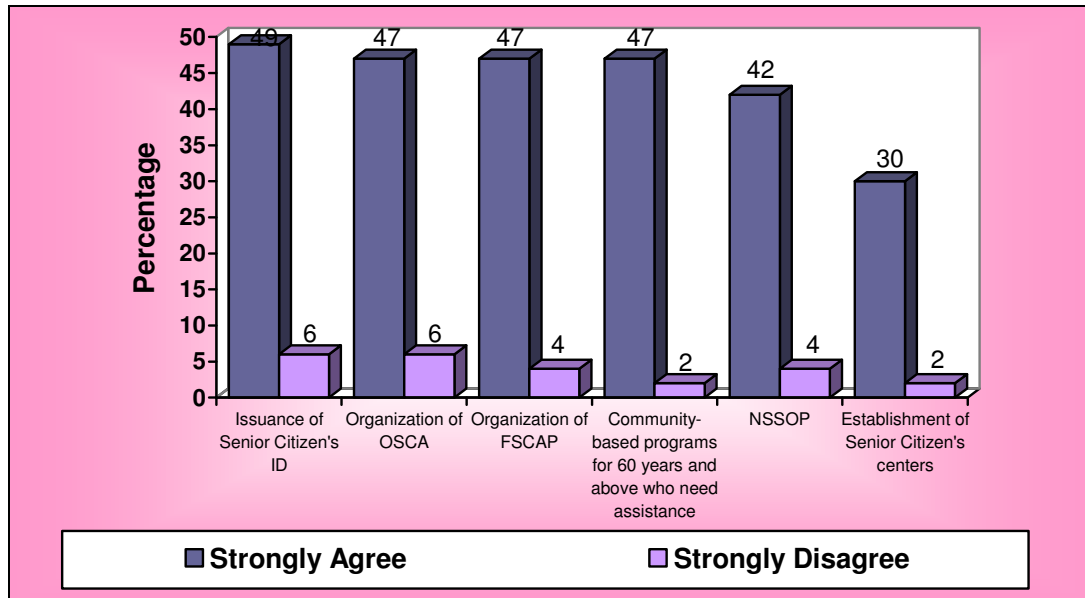


The Senior Citizen Program is one of the major social work programs of SWD, for the figure shown above more respondents give high value to TA of DSWD citing the registration and issuance of Senior Citizen's IDs (49%) and the least item on TA for older persons is the establishment of senior's citizen's centers (30%).

5.  TA on Developing Programs and Projects on WOMEN.
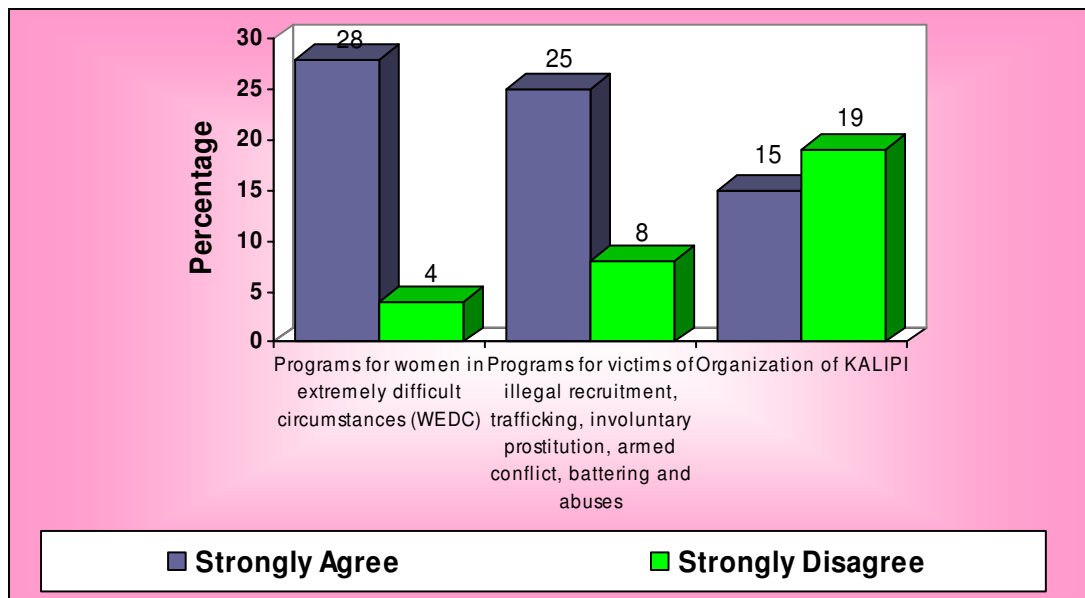
The graph shows different perspectives upon the social workers' responses on the TA relevant to developing programs and projects on women. Among the respondents, 28% give great substance on TA that deals with programs for women in extremely difficult circumstances (WEDC) but there are 4% of respondents who oppose it. About 25% rate favourably the TA on program for victims of illegal recruitment, trafficking, involuntary prostitution, armed conflict, battering and abuses but contrary to this there were about 8% who are against. TA on the organization of KALIPI, 15% strongly agrees on the kind of TA rendered for the program but the opposition is much higher, 19% of the respondents.

6. TA on Developing Programs and Projects on FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.
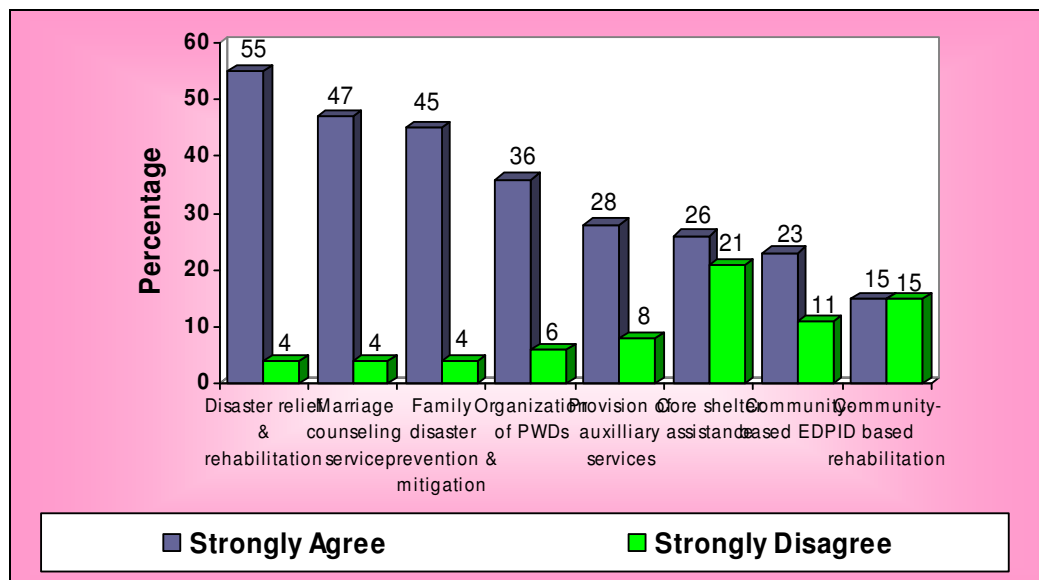


Families and Communities are big projects and thus, different views and opinions were again tested upon the participants. The unanimous percentage to half of the social workers highlighted the TA on disaster relief and rehabilitation with 55% strongly agree and community-based rehabilitation as the least with 15%. On the opposite side, 21% of the respondents negatively mark the TA provided to the core shelter assistance. Such TA has the highest on the "Strongly Disagree" position seconded by 11% on community-based EDPID.

7. TA on Developing Programs and Projects.
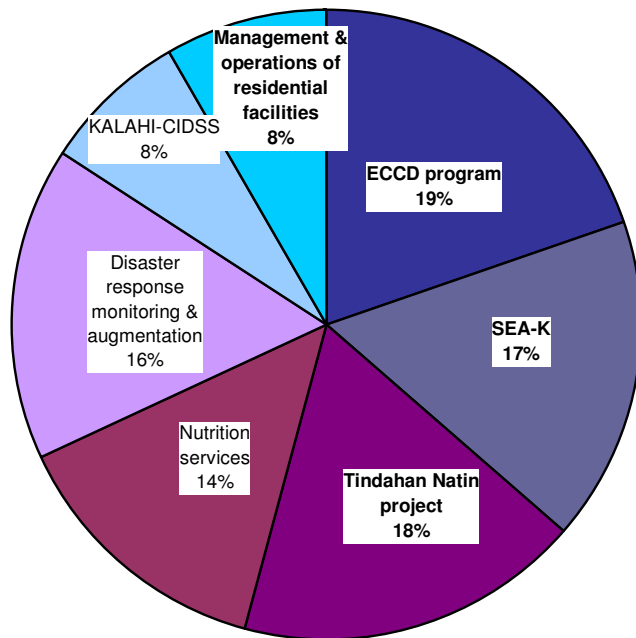
The pie chart indicates the current LSWD programs and projects with Technical Assistance Provision from DSWD. Tindahan Natin Project get the biggest share with 18% followed by SEA-K with 17%, the least are the KALAHI-CIDDS and Management and operations of residential facilities with 8% respectively. This indicates favourable TA extended to economic activities.


8.  TA on Standard setting and Compliance Monitoring
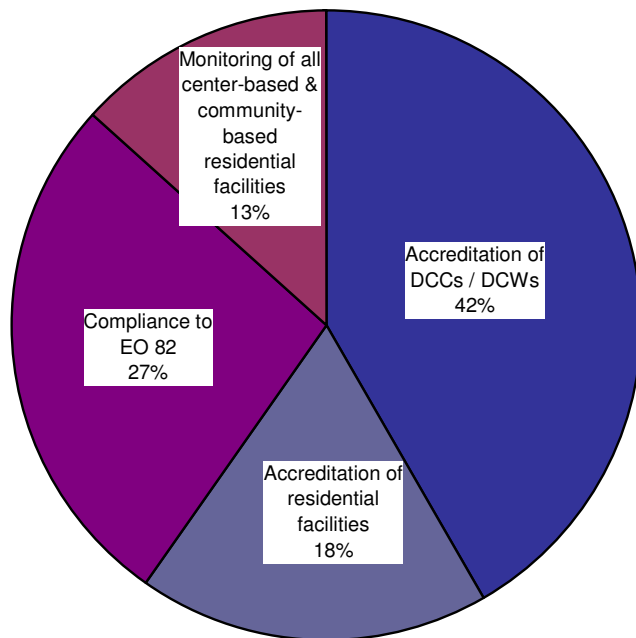
Other particular functions of social workers are also surveyed and 42% of respondents mark TA on services relevant to the accreditation of DCCs / DCWs as valued, followed by 27% compliance to EO 82, then accreditation of residential facilities with 18% and the least 13% monitoring of all center-based and community-based residential facilities.

9.  Services and Technical Assistance to Intermediaries (Trainings conducted).
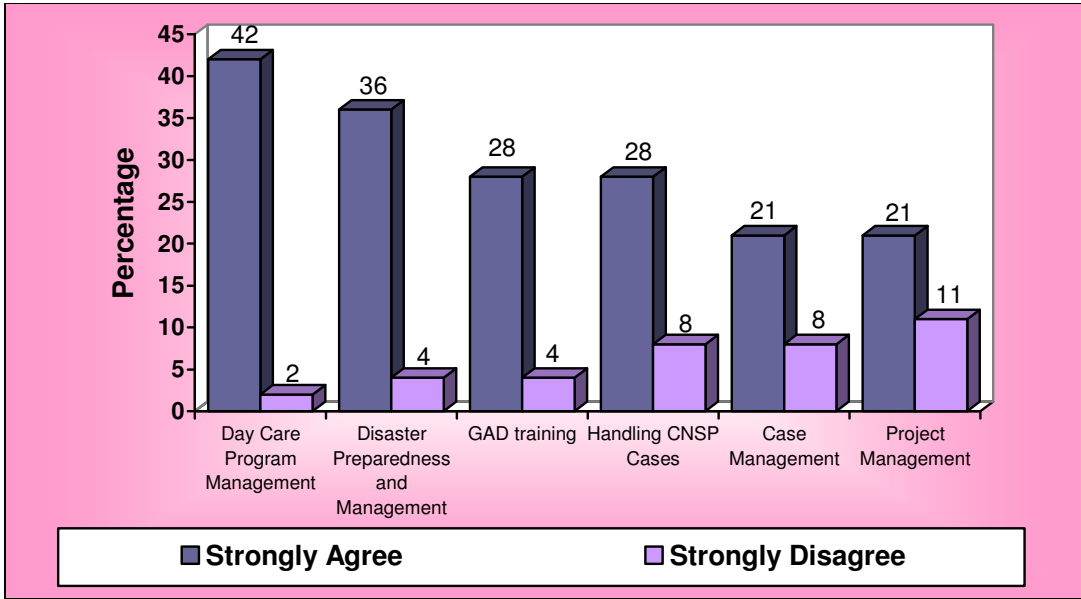


For the trainings conducted with intermediaries, 42% of respondents mark day care program management as an item with highly valued TA from DSWD with 2% strongly disagrees on it, followed by disaster preparedness and management with 4% who opposes it while Case and Project Management shared the same position for 21% affirmative with 8% and 11% on the opposition.

# PART V.  OVER-ALL SATISFACTION ON DSWD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

1.  Social Work Competencies and the Technical Assistance
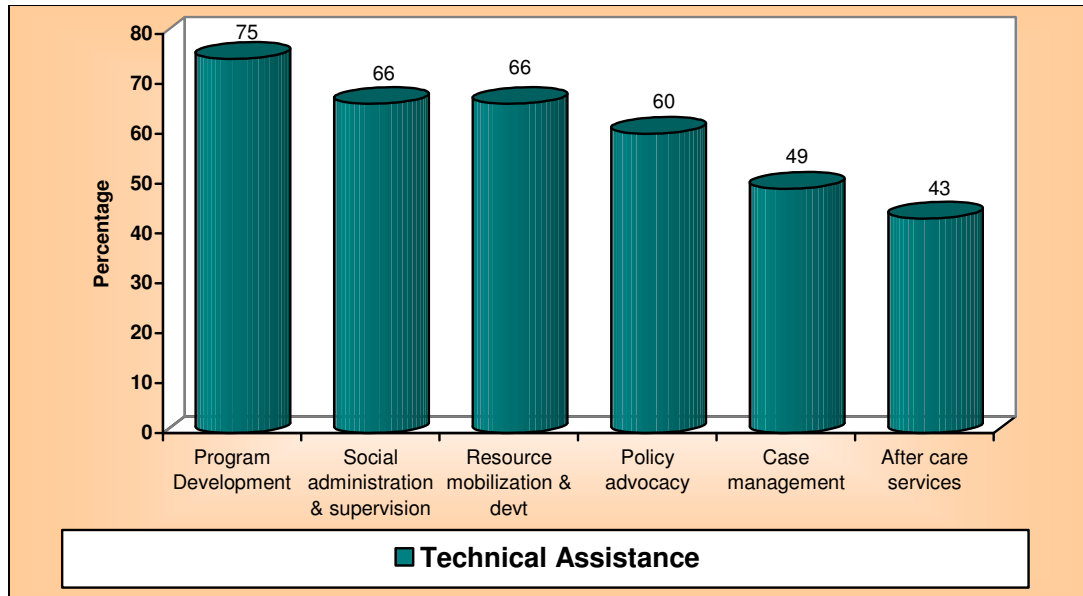


Respondents believe that Program Development tops the DSWD technical assistance rendered that developed or harnessed social work competencies, second is the social administration and supervision and resource mobilization and development with 66%, the least is the after care services with 43%.

2.  Forms of DSWD TA and LSWDOs' Needs

**Technical Assistance**
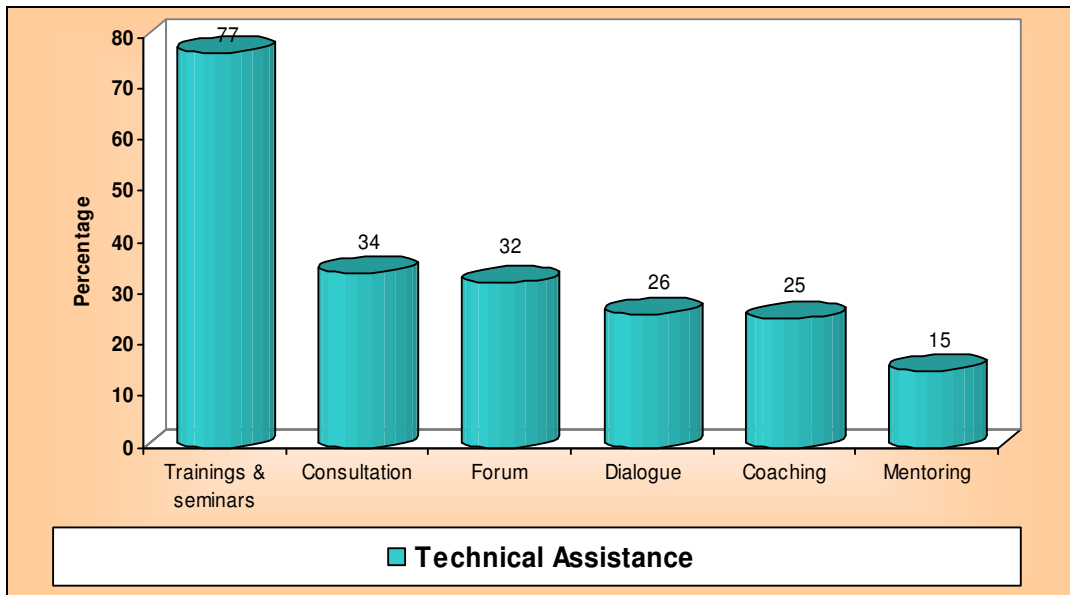
The Trainings and seminars get prominence with 77% as to the forms of technical assistance given by DSWD to the LSWDOs, consultation with 34% and mentoring as the least with 15%. These forms can be described also as TA events.


3. LSWDOs' Satisfaction of DSWD TA



**Technical Assistance**
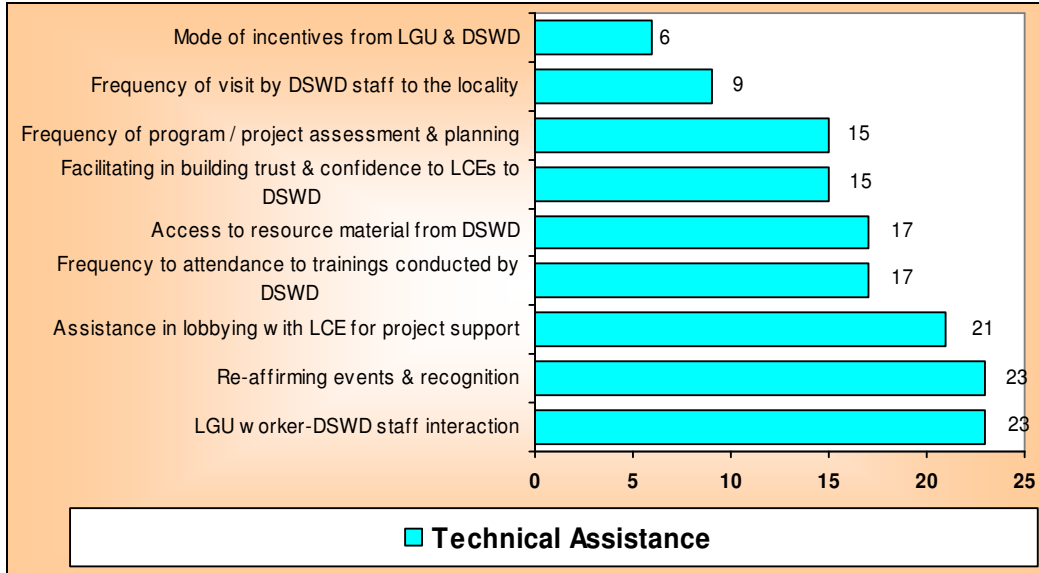
Among the social worker's events with DSWD, the survey reveals that the highest rate for TA pointed on the LGU-workers DSWD staff interaction and Re-affirming events and recognition with 23%, followed by Assistance in lobbying with LCE for project support with 21% and the least with 6% belong to the mode of incentives from LGUs and DSWD.

**VI. Data Interpretation and Analysis**


Research Locale

The study covered six (6) cities and four (4) provinces of Region XI dubbed as the Davao Provinces.

Participants of the Study

A sample of fifty-three (53) respondents comprised the study distributed among the different local government units (LGUs) in the region. The most number of respondents came from Davao del Sur which has 16 LSWDOS or 29% of the respondents.

This was followed by the Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley all of which had 23% of the respondents or 12 LSWDOs in their respective provinces. LSWDO Davao City covered 2% of the respondents. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents in the study.

Table I
Respondents of the study

| Location | No. of Respondents | |
|---|---|---|
| | X | % |
| LSWDO ComVal | 12 | 23 |
| LSWDO Davao del Norte | 12 | 23 |
| LSWDO Davao del Sur | 16 | 29 |
| LSWDO Davao Oriental | 12 | 23 |
| LSWDO Davao City | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 53 | 100 |


Socio Demographic Profile

SWD Offices were devolved from the Central Office of Department of Social Welfare and Development to the local governments upon implementation of the Local Government Code (RA 9160) in 1991. The prescribed SWD Office was not automatically set up into a local department but was considered for a while as section attached to a local government agency. The personnel were also devolved from national employment to local employment.

LSWDOs have relative experience in government service prior to devolution. Years of service were evenly spread out from one (1) year to eighteen (18) years.

There is a propinquity of residences of respondents to their assigned posts. The SWD heads (68%) live within or closer to their area of responsibility.

Most of the respondents were born within the year range from 1956 to 1960 at 40%. Thus, personnel were mostly in their late forty's or early fifty's. This was followed by personnel in their middle fifty's and early forty's at 26% and 19%, respectively. The rest of the birthdates of the respondents were spread out from 1966 onwards.

Social welfare and social work are still dominated by females where 96% of the social work leaders are women with 78% married.

Three-fourth or 76% of the personnel in the LSWDO are Social Workers the rest are non BSSW professionals. Non-BSSW LSWDOs thus need more time from DSWD to design professional educational upgrading scheme.

Most of the devolution process occurred during the fourth quarter of 1992. More than half (57%) of the SWD personnel were able to get their position as department heads within the period 1992-1996. Significant enough that 68% are full-pledged department heads at the time of the study. This may tend to show that LSWDOs' assertion, projection of social work professionalism and negotiation skills affect their assumption of top post in SWD offices.

Education wise, half of the personnel were bachelor's degree holders. One-third of the other-half however, are Master Degree holders while two-thirds are still pursuing graduate studies. Half of the personnel had their formal education taken 10 years ago or more. Attending to formal sessions for professional upgrading seems to be remote for the LSWDOs. Social work professional enterprise development is controlled by the organizational life of the local government units. DSWD's role and functions within its current mandate necessarily is at risk of being challenged by the drives and motivations of the LSWDOs.

Working Environment

Actual devolution of SWD offices began in the third quarter of 1991. Some respondents (57%) manifested that theirs was completed during the last quarter of 1992. Majority however, had only 1 to 3 staff members under their offices at 36%. There were offices also with 6 to 8 staff members at 26% and 10 or more at 17%. Noticeably, increases in staff complement were present.

Equipments and facilities were provided during the transfer of responsibility. Significantly, 87% of LGUs provided working spaces to the LSWDOs in their respective jurisdictions. In addition, computers, typewriters, cabinets and other fixtures were also brought in as part of the goodwill on the part of DSWD. Other DSWD's stuffs were donated to the LGUs as starter set.

The data only reflect the physical aspects of the work environment.

Professional Identity

Professional identity of the LSWDOs is operationally defined based on their interests of the social work profession, awareness on setting their self-development programs and goals relative to their professional practice; and how they value their colleagues' professional knowledge and wisdom in peer consultations.

Survey questionnaire was administered to the respondents requiring them to check agreement or disagreement to the question asked. Agreements and disagreements were ranked to the positive and negative side of scale respectively. Furthermore, range intervals of the collated results were provided for statistical analysis. Table 2 shows the rating of the responses.

Table 2
Summary Ratings

| Range Interval | Rating |
|---|---|
| 2.31-3.00 | Strong Agree |
| 1.66-2.30 | Agree |
| 1.00-1.65 | Disagree/ No Comment |

There were five (5) concerns on the questionnaire that determine the professional identity of the respondents of the study to which they answered either Strongly Agree (3), Agree (2) or Disagree/ No Comment (1). Table 3 shows the overall result of the set of questionnaire.

Table 3
Professional Identity Responses

| Location | Average | Rating |
|---|---|---|
| PSWDO Comal | 2.50 | Strongly Agree |
| PSWDO Davao del Norte | 2.20 | Agree |
| PSWDO Davao del Sur | 2.56 | Strongly Agree |
| PSWDO Davao Oriental | 2.38 | Strongly Agree |
| PSWDO Davao City | 3.00 | Strongly Agree |
| Average | 2.53 | Strongly Agree |

Based on the table, except for LSWDOs of Davao del Norte, all were unanimous that they complied with the conditions set to be professionally identifying themselves with the social work profession. Overall, they had a rating of 2.53 adjudged as in strong agreement. This means, the LSWDOs express their 1) positive outlook on the social work profession, 2) they set professional development goals, and have a 3) self-development program. Interestingly, they consult 4) social work colleagues in their professional practice. Peer-help in doing their social work managerial tasks aid in coping with the separation from the central office.

In addition, statistical analysis was used to determine whether the locations of the LSWDOs were consistent with their responses of the questionnaire asked. Table 4 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4
Correlation of Location with
Responses on Professional Identity

| N | Average | Computed $X2\alpha$ | Table $X^2$ | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 53 | 2.53 | 40.90 | $X^2$ = 15.51 Df=8 X=5% | Significant |

There is a significant association between location and the responses provided by the LSWDOs. Thus, the degree of agreement/ disagreement of the respondents of the survey questionnaire were reflective whether they are in the rural or urban areas, complete or incomplete facilities, and professional adherence to their social work and welfare services. It can be implied that those who are in the rural remote areas tend to be developing a low professional self-esteem as continuing guidance and supervision is impliedly required. External support seems to constitute the TA expected of DSWD. The

factors on geographical location and communication line seem to be relegated to the side in the entire process of DSWD technical assistance.

DSWD Technical Assistance Provisions

There were three (3) areas of the technical assistance of DSWD being asked of the respondents on their satisfaction. The first area was on 1) Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development, second area on 2) Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring and third area on 3) Services and Technical Assistance to Intermediaries.

Table 5 shows the ratings of responses for these areas.

Table 5
Summary of Ratings

| Range Intervals | Rating |
| --- | --- |
| 3.26-4.00 | Strongly Agree |
| 2.51-3.25 | Agree |
| 1.76-2.50 | Disagree |
| 1.00-1.75 | Strongly Disagree |

Reponses to TA Area I of the DSWD Focusing on laws and policy advocacy is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

DSWD Technical Assistance Provision
(Plans/Policy Advocacy)

| Area | Ratings | Remarks |
| --- | --- | --- |
| RA 9262 | 3.09 | Agree |
| RA 9208 | 2.94 | Agree |
| RA 9257 | 3.16 | Agree |
| RA 9442 | 3.07 | Agree |
| RA 9165 | 2.90 | Agree |
| PD 603 / RA 7610 | 3.47 | Strongly agree |
| LOBBYING | 3.19 | Agree |
| Special Events | 3.46 | Strongly agree |
| Average | 3.16 | Agree |

The table shows that the LSWDOs, although agreeing to have been oftentimes involved and provided with technical assistance in all laws and advocacies they were conservative in their responses in absolutely agreeing on the TA. Noticeably, all were in conformity to have been regularly involved and provided with technical assistance by DSWD on children protection and in the observance of special events (e.g children's month, senior citizen's week, family week, NDPR, women's month). Lowest ratings of agreement were on TA related to RA 9208 and RA 9165, Trafficking in Persons and Dangerous Drugs Act respectively. These laws have been enacted long time ago but TA in this regard is not seriously felt among the LSWDOs. Difficulty in the implementation of RA 9208 without further TA is confounded by the law itself as its local implementing mechanism is inadequately addressed in its implementing rules and guidelines.

Analysis by province was also checked on their collective responses to various laws and policy advocacies. Table 7 shows the comparative responses of the LSWDOs to the Technical Assistance Provision.

Table 7
Comparative Responses on
The Technical Assistance Provision

| N | Computed F | Tabular F | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 48.27 | Ft=7.31 X=5% | At least one pair of responses between LSWDOs is significantly different. |

Table 7 shows that a pair of LSWDOs significantly differed in responses. Examining further by pair showed that LSWDOs of Davao del Sur yielded significant difference in responses with that of LSWDO of ComVal and LSWDO of Davao City. The rest of the LSWDOs when compared yielded non-significance on all the areas of TA.

Satisfaction on DSWD Technical Assistance

Tabulated results on the responses as shown in Table 6 reflected consistently on the TA focused on services rendered to development of programs and projects relevant to the laws and policies advocated.

Advocacy and formulation of policies, plans, programs and social technology development yielded agreements to the priority alignments. Updating of local social welfare and development situationer, annual TARA formulation and sectoral plans were all primarily appreciated and considered with relatively strong involvement of DSWD.

Similarly with programs and projects for the youth and older persons, these composed the major works of LSWDO wherein there is negligible strong disagreements. Varied reactions however, were noted on the developed programs and projects on women wherein there is a negligible strong disagreement. However, organization of KALIPI garnered strong disagreement among respondents when asked about the devolved programs and projects on women.

KALIPI is a self-organization of women partner-beneficiaries of DSWD. When these women have not been followed up then by the LSWDOs, the organization's status is not ascertained. It is crucial for women to maintain links through their own community-based organization for self help efforts and empowerment processes. Concretely, visibility of social worker's role in advancing women's interests and welfare remains a challenge even as the Philippines is noted for having many laws that regulate gender asymmetry.

Community-based rehabilitation also evenly partitioned the participants' responses towards low satisfaction. There seems to be inadequate support extended to the conceptualization and development of appropriate community-based rehabilitation programs and projects engaging the LSWDOs to the level that increases their professional self-esteem. In a way, there appears a weak projection of LSWDOs in situations of disasters when community-based rehabilitation is near neglect tantamount to saying that social work function is still within residual limits.

The rest of the developed programs and projects on all sectors cited made a resounding grave strong agreement.

Consequently, livelihood programs and projects as well as community services were generally given proportionate allocation in terms of time and resources. ECCD program, SEA-K, Disaster response & augmentation, nutrition services and Tindahan Natin among others, were given near equal appreciation at more than 10%.

TA on Standard Setting and Compliance Monitoring were also received most with accreditation of DCCs/DCWs at 42%, Compliance of EO 82 at 27%, and monitoring of all center-based and community-based residential facilities and accreditation of residential facilities combined at 31%.

TA Area 3 (Services and Technical Assistance to Intermediaries) was also reviewed with the respondents. Trainings and seminars included Day Care Management, Disaster Preparedness, GAD trainings and other related management trainings were strongly identified to have been engaged by LSWDOs and provided with TA from DSWD.

Overall satisfaction on DSWD technical assistance can be geared from the social work competencies developed or harnessed. Programs development tops with 75%, followed by social administration and supervision in tandem with Resource Mobilization and development both at 66%, Policy Advocacy at 60%, case management at 49% and 43% for after care services.

Forms and events of Technical assistance given by DSWD to LSWDOs included trainings and seminars at 77%. This was followed in sequence by consultation, forum, and dialogue, coaching and mentoring at 34%, 32%, 26%, 25% and 15% respectively.

Satisfaction of LSWDOs is highest (23%) in LGU worker-DSWD staff interaction. Re-affirming events and recognition was likewise favourably received. Lowest rate was provided on the mode of incentives from LGU and DSWD. The results of these two extremes however, only show the commitment and resolve of the LSWDoS on their line of work that needs external support and creative incentives.

Level of Satisfaction on DSWD TA and LSWDOs' TA-Seeking Behaviour

Using SPSS, the correlation between the level of satisfaction of the LSWDOs on the TA of DSWD and their TA-Seeking Behaviour has a low significance or in essence is not significant where $P=$ ⁻.214. There is little evidence manifested in the study about the link between levels of agreement and disagreement on the provisions of technical assistance of DSWD and the technical assistance being sought by the LSWDOs since the devolution process.

From National to Local: Emerging Social Work Managers and Leaders

Cognizant of the fact that the study is long overdue a conduct of FGD was seen as in order. It was an attempt to provide a venue for the LSWDOs to ventilate their concerns and issues since the devolution of social welfare and development programs and projects. A set of questions was presented in a series of FGDs with the identified participants. This research technique yielded a set of qualitative data on further determining perceptions of social work and social welfare managers in the region on the technical assistance of DSWD hereunder revealed in themes that approximate the variables indicated in the synthesizing framework.

**Me and Myself as LSWDO**

Davao Oriental

The Local Social Welfare and Development Officers in Davao Oriental expect that they would be able to contribute to the realization of the goals and follow the direction set by the local government. They want the local social welfare workers and volunteers to consider their participation in the local social welfare and development work as a challenge.

They express their interest to work more to accomplish the assigned tasks. In pursuing such, they believe that they need to be more competent and productive. It is always their paramount concern to continue working for the welfare of the clients.

As years go by, being in the local government for the participating LSWDOs, is a test to prove the existence and worth of the local social welfare and development programs and services. However, some of them admit that they are uncomfortable with the multi-task assignments. In the local government practice, undeniably, the LSWDOs assume various tasks – from administrative, supervision, management of welfare and development programs and services, networking to budgeting and budget lobbying and hearing.

While they assumed many tasks in the local government, some think that their good relations with the local government unit tends to reduce if not completely resolve the problems they face as lead movers in social development work.

As one of them puts it, "I am okey, I have no problem as MSWDO. We have good relations with the LGU family. All devolved programs and services are implemented".

Compostela Valley

Commitment is on top in the self-expectations list of the heads of the social welfare and development programs and services in Compostela Valley. It is expressed as to ensure dynamic implementation of programs and services. They however, caution themselves by emphasizing that they could only do much when funding is locally provided for the programs and services. They expect that they would be involved in reorganizing the structure of local social welfare office.

As changes in the local social welfare programs and services are necessary to be able to meet the demands of the changing situation, the social welfare office heads hinted their willingness to adopt "modernization" of social welfare programs and services. This suggests that local realities call for innovations and appropriate approaches so they look forward to taking part in the change processes.

It is their expectation that they engage in altering their outlook and practice as local social welfare and development officer, thereby, changing people's view of social work roles and functions in local governance.

Recognizing that learning is a continuous process, they want to participate in capacity-building and capability enhancement for them to initiate, develop or improve social welfare and development programs. There is a brewing stance towards

realizing a responsive social administration mindful of developmental approach to social work.

Davao Sur

The local social welfare and development office heads of Davao Sur, meantime, desire to be equipped with handles and tools in social welfare and development planning and programming and think of themselves being empowered in carrying out their functions and tasks considering the opportunities offered in the local government code. It is their expectation as well to get involved in the realization of the Magna Carta for them to be recognized as local department heads with their own rights protected and welfare guaranteed.

To be able to give the same level of commitment and dedication to work as earlier experienced before devolution is equally important for the LSWDOs. Direct service delivery is a primary concern in support to the local government unit's program.

As the lead personnel in local government social welfare and development, it is crucial for them to be literate in information technology. Information dissemination, education and communication are components of the work in local government especially in meeting various stakeholders' needs and responding to demands of clientele groups among poverty stricken-communities.

The level of LGU responses and participation of people in helping goal-setting, programming, monitoring, assessment and evaluation seem to becoming more critical issues and concerns among the LSWDOs. This gesture indicates not only personal attachment to the functions and tasks but tends to strengthen social work professional identity in the midst of the many so-called development professionals proliferating in the region who get more recognition than the professionally-trained social workers.

Davao Norte

To perform duties more effectively and efficiently is a resounding expectation from the Davao Norte social work leaders. Concretely, implementing social services of the local government unit is viewed as a manifestation of their function. Delivery of quality social welfare services to the needy constituents is an overriding concern. As the LSWDOs, they expect to be good managers, catalysts, responsible and contribute to designing social welfare strategies and programs attuned to the concrete needs and objective conditions of the localities.

**Guidance and Supervision**

Majority of the LSWDOs lamented seriously on the abrupt turn-over of LSWDO to LGU, so to say, weaning process was almost completely absent. Their self-expectations are articulated in the context of their fears, apprehensions, ambivalence and anxieties associated to becoming a social work administrator under a law which was on its first phase of implementation during the turn-over. Guidance and supervision are twin issues that haunt them for almost two decades.

**Me and DSWD**

Technical assistance seems to be defined by the LSWDOs as akin to guidance and supervision. Technical Assistance events include monthly conference to know more about the problems, issues and concerns of LGU and DSWD programs and projects implementation. Thus one of them has this to say,

> "I have no problem with DSWD X1. But… SWAD
> Coordinator (DSWD) should have monthly conference to
> know more about the problems, issues and concerns of
> LGU & even DSWD (programs) implementation"

They expect the technical assistance provision of DSWD continues and that DSWD's enhanced programs and services should be suited to LGU needs and problems. The technical assistance should be complemented with consistent administrative support.

Improve working relations is a major expectation as the technical assistance is desired to be designed according to particularities of the localities while bringing to LGU updates on programs and standards in social welfare and social work practice.

**Positive Influences in LSWDO Performance**

7. Internal Resources of the LSWDO

While the LSWDOs are still eerie with the turn-over, they have identified good relations with the LGU. This level of relationship with the local chief executives is mediated by the internal resources of the LSWDOs such as 1) Positive attitude towards work 2) Risk Taking 3) ability to establish rapport with LGU officials & other functionaries and positive working relations with other agencies 4) taking initiatives and resourcefulness 5) Finding external and internal resources 6) Always ask technical assistance to DSWD 6) increased capacities gained from trainings 7) Personal and professional experiences 8) Patience.

8. External Resources of the LSWDO

When the LCEs are knowledgeable on social welfare programs and supportive in the implementation, they are a great influence on the performance of LSWDO. Specifically, the LSWDOs believe that LCEs who are pro-poor pro people, pro-development create opportunity for development thereby contributing to social workers' increased outputs and outcomes in their performance.

The devolution mandate places social worker's role in locality development and social service delivery in the limelight. It is a national law that provides change in local policy environment as social dimensions of development efforts are taken into consideration but LSWDOs realize the need for continuing technical assistance and professional education. It should be noted that a significant number of LSWDOs have not upgraded themselves in terms of formal education (see socio-demographic profile).

**Negative Influences in LSWDO Performance**

1. Internal

The LSWDOs recognize the weak image of the Social Work office (or the Social Work Leadership) as a factor in their performance. Social worker's professional identity may play a role in the poor image associated to social work. Poor projection of social work is affected by the professional self-image of social workers themselves. It is beginning to surface as a concern among social workers leading the local social welfare and development organizations. While most of the LSWDOs have expressed that they like the social work profession and have set their own self-development program, the collective projection of social workers in their practice may have tainted the image of the SWD office.

The composite staff of development workers in the local government units complicates the matter as it is not only social workers who are involved in social service delivery and development programming but other professions and vocations are.

The overwhelming admission by LSWDOs in the lack of technical expertise required of their functions tends to explain the issues in poor self-image. Poor professional self-image may affect their supervision and guidance to non-social work professionals, thereby contributing to the weak image of the SWD offices in other localities.

2. External

Local politics and consequent political interventions in the delivery of social services expressed in "palakasan" system bother all LSWDOs. The condition becomes a major concern and issue that hinders their functioning as professional helpers with concern for social justice, human rights and democracy.

The inadequate human resources allocated to the local social welfare and development offices speak not only of numbers but qualifications. There are units which have more personnel who are not professionally trained to assume social work related tasks. Their assignment is on the basis of the politician's accommodation due to services rendered during electoral campaigns.

Ignoring this action by the local politicians is not within the capacity so far by the LSWDOs even as their own job position and functions could be altered at the whims and caprices of the LCEs. Corollary, to demand for an increase in the staff is hard for LSWDO to initiate. Skills in negotiation and assertion seem to be a strong concern for human resource development among LSWDOs.

Performance check by LSWDO is also affected by the funds available. Budgetary constraint contributes negatively to their ability to provide timely and appropriate services to the clientele groups.

Most of the LSWDOs expressed problem that points to the lack or unclear program standards for SWD. Standards and guidelines are relative and thus are supposed to be designed in the context of local realities. However, broadly stroke national standards are expected by the LSWDOs so that localization efforts may be easier as gleaned from the FGD sessions held for this study.

This particularly, leads to further definition of TA events and scope. Strongly, the LSWDOs tagged DSWD's TA as becoming less and less when operationalization of standards and guidelines in the context of their realities are involved.

LSWDOs lamented on their additional functions. They have been disturbed by the many assignments as activities they are engaged in vary – from LGU to DSWD. Prioritization of DSWD programs implementation seems to be difficult for other LSWDOs to undertake. They seem to advance the idea that DSWD comes up with a process whereby its programs and projects become appropriate for implementation at the local level. DSWD as conduit of President's special and seasonal projects affect the localization of SWD programs and services in ways that LSWDOs become mere implementers of the national executive's pet projects. There is a value in examining this trend as indigenous responses to local issues may have been affected as the national special projects consume a considerable time.

When LCE's do not consider social welfare as priority, LSWDOs suffer most and believe that they have no outputs and outcomes are hard to work out.

## Level of Satisfaction

As surmised from the FGDs and survey, LSWDOs level of satisfaction on the technical assistance of DSWD is on Level 2. Level 2 operationally means satisfaction of LSWDO is relatively strong on at least two (2) DSWD technical functions (e.g. Services Relating to the Advocacy and Formulation of Policy, Plans, Programs and Social Technology Development (public/social policy practice and social technology development, enhancement and assessment) and Standards Setting and Compliance Monitoring (social welfare and development standards check and review). There is no single LSWDO who have strong feeling of satisfaction on all the three areas of TA.

Satisfaction is relatively strong likewise to projects with funding as in the ECCD and livelihood related activities. Pilot projects seem to be complicated for the LSWDOs as these require more human, time and material resources with solid ground work. Sustainability of pilot projects remains a problem in the context of the local conditions thus evaluation is critical.

## Conclusion

The correlation between level of satisfaction of LSWDOs on DSWD TA and the technical assistance-seeking behaviour of LSWDOs is not significantly suggested by the study. However, as LSWDOs command initiatives and advance their interest in seeking TA on various DSWD functions to fully effect devolution, a strong satisfaction of DSWD TA by the LSWDOs remains in the level that pertain to legislative policy advocacy, formulation of plans, programs and social technology development and standards setting and compliance monitoring.

Services and technical assistance to intermediaries that include professional self-esteem development and complementation/augmentation of direct services (center and community-based) are still perceived to be inadequate if not satisfactorily extended.

As the LSWDOs expect technical assistance in varied forms and events on the DSWD functions, their negative collective reaction to the survey and study

presents a "sweet lemon" like response. They wonder and lament why it took almost two decades for DSWD to gather feedback and conduct an evaluation.

Achieving a more satisfying and dynamic relationship between DSWD and LSWDO is strongly mediated by the professional self-image, LGU leadership/LCE stance and attitude, social work professional community and academic and professional advancement or pursuits of each LSWDO.

The personal resources (professional self-image, assertion and negotiation skills) of the LSWDO coupled with early positive work experiences indeed play a primary role in their early stage of survival as emerging social work leaders at the height of devolution. Peers and family orientation on social work seem to positively complement the abilities demonstrated on the ground disturbingly fertile with politicians' machinations.

Absent in the flashback and review of realities behind the devolved functions of DSWD is the engagement of the social work professional community (PASWI and or NASWEI). More importantly, the formation and role of the Association of Local Government Social Welfare Officers (ALGSWs) is not mentioned as contributory to whatever level of confidence the LSWDOs gain.

The local government leadership poses a challenge to LSWDOs' capacity and ability to persuade in order to win over the entire LGU to the side of the marginalized, oppressed, exploited and deprived sectors of the local community. As any social welfare and development goals and programs and projects are first and foremost geared to improve the lives, empower and enhance social functioning of the local majority constituents, social work in local government still in a dilemma of pursuing professional enterprise. This perfectly reminds the LSWDOs in their quest for a niche in local governance.

The mechanisms of social work enterprise paved by PASWI and NASWEI in the Philippines defined the professional autonomy sixty years ago. Yet and still, public social workers in local government are subject to the imperatives of an organizational life not within their sphere of control. Apprehensions as to when to gain full professional status prevail if not put LSWDOs to passivity and resignation. With the political climate, social work is susceptible to the views of those who control its resources.

Challenges on the level of competence of LSWDOs in their role performance towards responsive local governance remain critical at this stage of Philippine social development where globalization is effacing and impacting negatively to the social work client system. DSWD's role in improving people's lives is much implied than ever and emphatically integral in its current mandate of extending technical assistance to local government units. Notwithstanding, its role and function in direct service delivery via pilot projects (that demand impact evaluation vis a vis capacity of SWD offices to sustain and replicability) continues to be a touching base dimension of its basic function -  the primary social welfare arm of the state.

**Recommendations**

**For DSWD**

1. Periodic assessment and evaluation of TA provision with the participation of LCE
9. Periodic technical assistance events and forms should be varied and creative and according to LSWDO's particularities.
10. Provide incentives to LGU Social Workers on implementation of National Program
11. Lobbying of the full implementation of Magna Carta for Social Workers
12. Lobby on the creation of MSWDO item
13. Conduct team building/ capacity building per sectoral concerns, laws and national policies
14. Research agenda development and periodic conduct of studies with active engagement of LSWDOs on social work research via SWD L-net expansion
10. Coaching and support for TARA plans with corresponding ritualization of actions binding for LGU
11. DSWD's engagement with local development councils for executive agenda development while strengthening relations with local legislative bodies for localization of national policies.
18. Lobby for more social workers in court
19. Develop and publish professional resource kit on specific line of work or technical expertise expected of LSWDOs.
20. Develop and conduct assertion training that enhances local social work leadership and management
21. Appoint DSWD liaison for clustered SWD Offices as point person on TA to avoid fast turn-over of focal persons and for continuity and smooth follow-through of TA. Implication is for DSWD itself to train field officers with enough confidence and competence to provide comprehensive support to LSWDOs thereby creating DSWD sustainable TA environment.
22. Format, focus and logistical support to technical assistance are important elements in the review of TA of DSWD to LSWDOs.
23. Launch a mobile school of social work administration and management designed for a 4-10 month course work with built-in practicum as a packaged support with university credit equivalent for LSWDOs especially for non-BSSW and non-MSW.

**For LSWDOs**

1. Sustain professional self-development program
2. Conscious positive projection of professional self
3. Formation of professional study circles within SWD office as an initiative for continuous peer-learning and peer technical support.
4. Consciously seek technical assistance as a form of continuing professional education in and outside DSWD

5. Consciously identify professional self with local social work professional organization by being active member or officer of PASWI chapter
6. Build local social work resource pool for LGU program support (e.g. lawyers pool, accountants, fund raisers, grants development and funding partners' relationship building, etc)
7. Conduct local social work exchange or exposure for theory-building and field practice check and review.

**For PASWI/NASWEI**

1. Provide systematic professional continuing education
2. Dynamic formation of and support for chapters in the localities as support group in advancing professional interests within the localities
3. Advance the LSWDOs' capacity as Agency Field Instructors for student field education as venue for exchange of young and maturing social workers in strengthening professional autonomy through regular field placement
4. Sustain and strengthen SWD offices as social laboratory for social work theory-practice continuum in field education