

Trans-Local Government Collaboration as an Approach for International Development Assistance: The Saemaul Globalization Project in Balincaguing Village, Philippines

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Abstract

The implementation of development programs in rural areas has been one of the most challenging responsibilities for international assistance and development agencies since the beginning of the new millennium. Neoliberal development policies have failed to resolve the urgent problems of reducing inequality and eradicating poverty, while current trends in international development assistance are yet to obtain sustainable and beneficial results. Consequently, a non-traditional instrument for international development assistance has drawn the attention of researchers and policymakers. This approach characterizes local governments' active involvement and collaboration worldwide, otherwise known as 'decentralized development cooperation,' hereinafter, 'trans-local government collaboration.' At the very core, this paper aims to examine this approach through the case study of the Saemaul Globalization Project (SGP) in Balincaguig village, collaboratively implemented between the provincial government of North Gyeongsang, South Korea, and the municipal government of San Felipe in Zambales, Philippines. The SGP is a comprehensive rural development project that originates from South Korea's Saemaul Undong (New Village Movement) which promotes ownership and self-reliance among the beneficiaries. In terms of providing livelihood opportunities, construction of infrastructures, capacity-building, and skills and technology transfer, the project is deemed a success during its implementation from 2012 to 2016. Hence, this paper hypothesizes that the successful implementation and administration of SGP in Balincaguig village results from the effective trans-local collaboration between North Gyeongsang and San Felipe's local governments. With the success of SGP in Balincaguig village, this paper suggests that an effective trans-local government collaboration is a supplemental approach for international development assistance and a determining factor in the successful implementation of development programs in rural areas.

Keywords: Local government, collaborative governance,
international development assistance, Saemaul Undong, rural development

Introduction and Purpose of the Research

The implementation and administration of development programs in rural areas has been one of the most challenging responsibilities for state governments, domestic institutions, and international assistance agencies since the onset of the new millennium. In this age of uncertainty and insecurity, neoliberal development policies have failed to resolve the urgent call to reduce inequality and eradicate poverty. At the same time, current and traditional international development trends are yet to obtain sustainable outcomes with long-term benefits. As a result of the decreasing efficiency and diversification of traditional international development and foreign aid mechanisms, non-conventional actors and instruments have emerged in the scene. Jain and Yoshida (2003) stated that the foreign aid's landscape has rapidly shifted and evolved from a two-tiered system comprised of the central governments and international organizations to a multi-tiered system involving non-conventional development partners such as the local governments.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), the aid extended by local governments to international development assistance, formally known as "decentralized aid," has increased from USD 800 million in 2002 to nearly USD 2 billion in 2015. Although the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of local governments only accounts for 2% of the global bilateral aid, 18 out of 30 countries from the OECD-DAC are engaged in trans-local government collaboration. Additionally, the OEDC reported that the aid contributed by local governments consists of a wide variety of activities ranging from small projects to cultural cooperation and exchange. Despite the limited amount of aid in numbers, the OECD affirmed that local governments contribute to the international development landscape in terms of transferring know-how experiences and local administration expertise to its counterpart (Chadwick, 2017). However, Perez (2018) pointed out that despite the growing importance of aid activities from local authorities, studies and analyses remain limited in the literature of development policy.

At the very core, this research aims to examine this non-conventional approach of international development assistance through local governments' collaboration from different countries. In particular, this paper cites the collaboration between the Provincial Government of North Gyeongsang, South Korea, and the municipal government of San Felipe, Zambales, Philippines, in the implementation of the Saemaul Globalization Project (SGP) in Balincaguing village, Philippines.

The creation of Saemaul pilot village in the Balincaguing was successfully implemented from 2012 until 2016 in terms of providing livelihood opportunities, construction of infrastructure projects, capacity-building, and skills and technology transfer. Hence, this paper hypothesizes that the successful implementation and administration of the SGP in Balincaguing village resulted from the effective trans-local collaboration between the provincial government of North Gyeongsang, South Korea, and the municipal government of San Felipe, Zambales, The Philippines. With the success of

SGP, this paper suggests that an effective trans-local government collaboration is a supplemental approach for international development assistance and a determining factor in the successful implementation of development programs in rural areas.

Literature Review

Several studies on the traditional actors and approaches of international development assistance in rural areas are published. However, most of the previous literatures do not take into account the non-conventional players and processes involved in the implementation of such programs or the manner and strategy of its administration. For instance, studies have been carried out concerning the impact and efficiency of traditional instruments for international development assistance (e.g., ODA) and doubted its ability to foster development and economic growth. Arndt et al. (2010) recognized that foreign aid remains a vital tool for augmenting development initiatives, particularly at the microeconomic level, but not at the macro perspective. Seemingly, Gulrajani (2015) argued that the world remains to discern international development assistance as a 'failure' in eliminating poverty, which led to organizational reform among aid donors. With these in mind, Sumner and Mallett (2013) claimed that there is a revolution in the landscape of foreign aid wherein goals, players, and instruments are evolving and rapidly shifting to non-conventional approaches such as the involvement of local government authorities.

Although cross-border partnerships in regions with adjacent territories have been common in building diplomatic and economic relations, trans-local government collaboration has emerged as a new trend for development assistance fostering and yielding favorable outcomes both for donors and recipients. Looking for alternatives, Hafteck (2003) reported that traditional donors have turned to local governments as project managers of grassroots development since they possess in-house expertise and know-how experience in decision-making at the local level. Meanwhile, Nganje (2015) recognized the rising prominence of non-state and sub-state actors in global affairs captured through the perspective of "complex interdependence" by Keohane and Nye (1977) in which the traditional relations of states and networks of trans-governmental exchanges involving a diverse cast of actors characterize the contemporary international affairs.

For instance, European countries are known for incorporating cross-border relationships through cross-border regions, often called Euroregions or "Euregio." Such cross-border initiatives and governance are typical for the European Union (EU) member states (Pikner, 2008). In Asia, Khon Kaen City in Thailand and Nanning City in China have formally signed a close partnership since 2002 to promote cultural and educational exchanges between the two cities (Fenglian & Narrot, 2017). A study published by Nakamura et al. (2011) also stated that local governments in Japan, particularly prefectures and cities, have been actively involved in international environmental management with local governments in Asian developing countries.

Examining trans-local government collaboration as an international development assistance approach for rural development entails significance in two aspects: (1) further studies and (2) practical application. First of all, this study's results are theoretically beneficial to the literature and studies of rural development, international development, local governance, and Saemaul Undong (SMU). In particular, this study's theoretical framework is deemed significant in supplementing the existing international development theories and collaborative process models. Secondly, this study aims to be beneficial to the Philippines' policymakers to improve the administration of rural development programs so that local governments will not need to seek foreign assistance from their counterparts in other countries. This study is also instrumental to South Korea in promoting SMU as an ODA for rural development.

Theoretical Framework

In explaining the effectiveness of trans-local government collaboration and determining its influence in the successful implementation of the SGP, this paper utilizes the "Model of Collaborative Governance" by Chris Ansell and Alison Gash (2008). Collaborative governance is a governance model that brings multiple stakeholders together in common forums, facilitates two-way communication, and practices consensus-oriented decision-making.

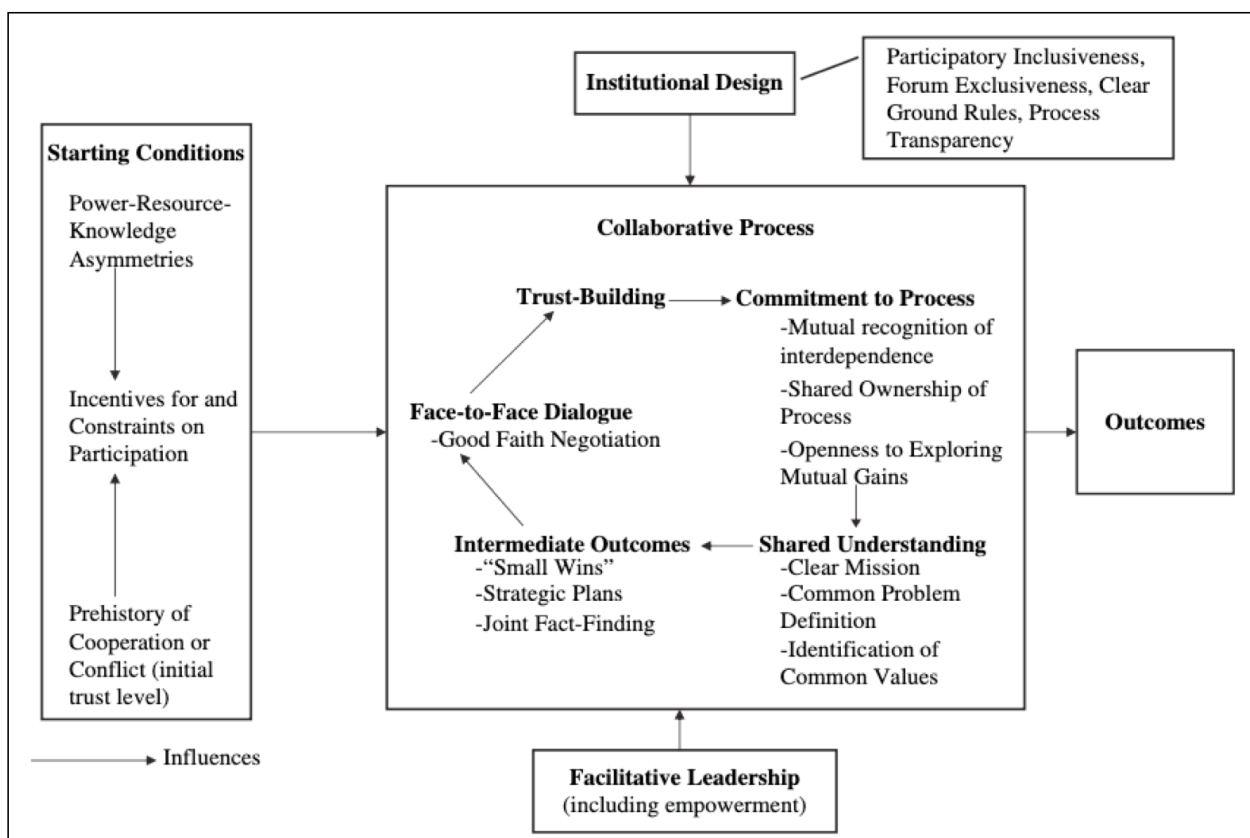


Figure 1 Model of Collaborative Governance by Ansell and Gash (2008)

Source: Ansell and Gash (2008).

Based on the theoretical model, collaborative governance has four broad variables – starting conditions, institutional design, facilitative leadership, and collaborative process (Ansell & Gash, 2008, p. 550). Firstly, the starting conditions pertain to the primary causes and antecedents that may either initiate or discourage the collaborative process. Second, facilitative leadership pertains to bringing the stakeholders together and getting them engaged in a collaborative spirit. Third, the institutional design refers to the basic rules and protocols for collaboration, which are significant to the process's procedural legitimacy. Lastly, the collaborative process consists of the core of the model with five key concepts: (1) face-to-face dialogue, (2) trust-building, (3) commitment to the process, (4) shared understanding, and (5) intermediate outcomes (Ansell & Gash, 2008, p. 557)

Ansell and Gash (2008, p. 558-561) stated that face-to-face dialogue refers to the “thick communication” between the stakeholders. Effective collaboration is possible if there is a direct dialogue between the participants. Second, absence or lack of trust among the participants is a common starting point for collaborative governance. An effective collaborative process is facilitated by leaders who recognize the necessity of trust-building. Third, effective collaboration requires a commitment to the process and dedicated participants willing to abide by the rules, protocols, and implementation guidelines. Fourth, shared understanding refers to the “common mission,” “common ground,” “common purpose,” and “common objectives” of the collaborators. The collaborative process's last critical variable is the intermediate outcomes, consisting of the “small wins” and initial benefits that dictate the iterative cycle and recurrence of the collaboration..

Methodology

This research utilizes an exploratory qualitative case study approach. This paper opts for a qualitative research design since studying the implications of the collaboration between the key actors and institutions can be best understood using a method that will produce bias-free, open-ended, and clear interpretative outcomes. Moreover, a case study approach is expected to stimulate and develop new research supporting the limited literature regarding the topic.

The target population is determined through non-probability sampling since the participants of this study are selected purposely based on their direct involvement, roles, and responsibilities in the collaboration for the project. The key actors and project facilitators participated in a semi-structured interview and focus group discussion (FGD). Balincaguig village, the project's location, is the primary setting or locale of the study.

For the data presentation and analysis, this paper has applied comparative qualitative analysis and content analysis. For the data presentation, the interviewees' responses are summarized and presented in table format to identify the similar and dissimilar factors and conditions that highlight their input and commitment to their collaboration towards the project. Meanwhile, content analysis is used

to interpret the conducted interviews. Overall, the data analysis is expected to generate conclusions for the study.

The Saemaul Globalization Project (SGP) in Balincaguig village

The SGP originated from the Saemaul Undong (SMU), translated as New Village Movement, a community-driven development program initiated during the 1970s in South Korea. It is a successful model of rural community development initiated during former President Park Chung Hee's administration. The model is considered the driving force in the country's rural development and growth (Asian Development Bank, 2012). In the 1990s, the movement started to get attention from other developing countries with the desire to learn about South Korea's experiences, which had a successful transition from a poverty-stricken community to an industrialized economy. The heightened interest of the international society in SMU resulted in the creation of different rural development projects patterned after the movement.

As part of the movement's globalization, several government institutions and agencies have implemented rural development projects in other countries. The provincial government of North Gyeongsang is one of the participating institutions which conducted training programs inside and outside South Korea for the recipient countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Since 2005, the provincial government implemented the SGP as the basis of effective and sustainable implementation and localization of SMU through research institutes and pilot villages. The project aims to develop self-reliance in the community and strengthen local governance among its recipient locales (Heo & Lee, 2016).

Balincaguig, located in the municipality of San Felipe, Zambales province, is the first recipient of the SGP in the Philippines. The village's primary economic source is agriculture, while essential utilities include electricity distributors, public water systems, and vehicles such as tricycles and motorcycles. The populace's main occupation is farming, and rice is the major agricultural product, followed by corn, sweet potato, and vegetables. According to the research published by the College of Social Work and Development (CSWD) of the University of the Philippines, 76% of the total number of households in Balincaguig is living below the poverty threshold with an annual income lower than 109,680 PHP (approx.. 2,300 USD) in 2015 (Vallejos et al., 2016). The research also stated that 33% or 15 of the 46 household-respondents earn less than 20,000 PHP (approx. 400 USD) annually. Among the significant problems identified by the people of Balincaguig are lack of job opportunities, insufficient irrigation system, disaster risks management, lack of health facilities, food insecurity, and lack of capital for farming (Vallejos et al., 2016, p.19).

The projects initiated through SGP are implemented for five years. The projects collaborated by the Saemaul Globalization Foundation (SGF), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and

Balincaguing residents started in 2012 with the construction of community hall, library, kindergarten, and piggery, the formation of local Saemaul Organization, and training with six dispatched volunteers from South Korea. In 2013, the expansion of drinking water wells, construction of village roads, installation of public toilets, pig breeding, and organic fertilizing were among the projects collaborated by the villagers and the volunteers. In 2014, cow banking was added to the projects initiated by the Foundation. The following year, organic farming was introduced, and computer education for the villagers was offered. In the last year of implementation in 2016, the water supply system was developed. Also, more farming techniques were introduced, and training in sewing was held. Finally, the project was completed at the beginning of 2017. A total of 25 South Korean volunteers were dispatched in Balincaguing for five years. Table 1. summarizes the projects implemented through SGP in Balincaguing.

Table 1. List of Implemented Saemaul projects in Balincaguing village

Year	Projects or Activities
2012	Construction of community hall, construction of library and kindergarten, pig breeding, formation of Saemaul Organization, and conducting Saemaul training
2013	Expansion of drinking water wells, paving village roads, installation of public toilets, organic fertilizer, and breeding earthworm projects, pig breeding, formation of Saemaul Organization, and conducting Saemaul training
2014	Paving village roads, installation of public toilets, organic fertilizer, and breeding earthworm projects, pig breeding, cow banking projects, introduce organic farming, formation of Saemaul Organization, and conducting Saemaul training
2015	Construction of community hall, construction of library and kindergarten, pig breeding, formation of Saemaul Organization, and conducting Saemaul training
2016	Drinking water supply development, farming technique education, organic fertilizer and breeding earthworm projects, introduction of organic farming, sewing training, formation of Saemaul Organization, and conducting Saemaul training

Source: Saemaul Globalization Foundation (2017)

Trans-Local Government Collaboration between North Gyeongsang and San Felipe

In the selected case study, the variables in the Theoretical Model of Collaboration by Ansell and Gash (2008), such as the starting conditions, collaborative process, institutional design, and facilitative leadership, correspond to the implementation of the SGP. It is identified that the implementation of SGP is classified as a collaboration based on the theoretical model's criteria. SGP is a public policy-oriented program designed to develop the rural village of Balincaguing in the Philippines. Most importantly, the implementation of SGP is participated by different actors consisting of private institutions, public agencies, local government units, and the villagers.

1. Facilitative Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities of Key Actors and Institutions

The roles, functions, and responsibilities of the key actors and institutions and their direct involvement in the collaboration equate to facilitative leadership. In line with this, semi-structured interviews and focus-group-discussion were conducted with the key-informants settled in San Felipe and Balincaguig village, Philippines. Meanwhile, online interviews were facilitated with the representatives from the SGF and the KOICA.

Table 2. Key Institutions and Actors in the Implementation of SGP

Institution	Name of Key-Informant(s) Interviewed/Consulted	Role/Function	Responsibilities
Municipal Government of San Felipe (Zambales, Philippines)	Atty. Carolyn S. Fariñas	Municipal Mayor (2010-2016)	Engaged and participated in different leadership training and seminars organized by the provincial government of North Gyeongsang; Acted as the main communication channel and mediator between the Korean volunteers and Balincaguig villagers
	Mr. Conrado Aldaba Jr.	Project Coordinator	Coordinated with the SGF officials and KOICA leaders in the provision of livelihood opportunities and infrastructure projects
	Mr. Rowel Villanueva	Social Worker	Coordinated with the Korean volunteers in the implementation of social development projects and leadership training
Balincaguig village Saemaul organization	Mr. Napoleon Domingo	Village Captain (2012-2016)	Shared the lessons learned/ acquired during the training in South Korea to constituents; Motivated and empowered the citizens to participate in the implementation of SGP
	Ms. Cynthia Abdon	Village Captain (2016-2018)	Issued evaluation and progress report; Monitored the livelihood projects
	Mr. Jesse Dansalan	Village Captain (2018-present)	Post-implementation monitoring and evaluation; Update SGF about the sustainability of the project from 2017 onwards
	Ms. Evelyn Farala	Leader, Balincaguig Women's Association	Ensured that Balincaguig women are well-represented and take part in the operation of the projects

Institution	Name of Key-Informant(s) Interviewed/Consulted	Role/Function	Responsibilities
Provincial Government of North Gyeongsang (South Korea)	Hon. Kim Kwan Young*	Provincial Governor (2006-2018)	The “brain” in the expansion of SGP to developing countries; Spearheads the overall process of SGP implementation
Saemaul Globalization Foundation (SGF)	Mr. Lee Kyung Bok	Project Manager	The “arm” in the expansion of SGP; Examines potential Saemaul pilot village; Publish research about the evaluation of SGP in Balincaguig village
	Mr. Park Kyung Soon	Volunteer	Execution of development projects; Cultural exchange with the villagers
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	Mr. Son Tae Kyun	KOICA Team Leader for the Philippines (2012-2016)	Monitored and evaluated the collaboration between SGF and Balincaguig villagers; Served as the facilitative actor in terms of consensus-building, mediation, and nonbinding arbitration

*Source: Arirang Special M60 - Kim Kwan Yong Interview (Arirang TV, 2015);
Author’s interview with the key-informants

2. Institutional Design for the Collaboration

The institutional design corresponds to the ground rules and protocols in the collaboration of the participants. As highlighted in the facilitative leadership, the collaborators' roles, functions, and responsibilities were made effective through the institutional design. Based on the interviews with the key actors, the collaboration for SGP was made possible due to the completion of tasks and enforcement of implementation rules. Mr. Lee Kyung Bok stated that the collaboration was successful due to the comprehensive understanding of each participant on their roles and responsibilities in the project (Lee, 2019). Likewise, Mayor Carolyn Fariñas stated that all the highest to lowest tier participants were adequately informed of the collaboration protocols and procedures (Fariñas, 2019). Most importantly, there was no overlapping of responsibilities as the participants were concentrated in their designated roles during the collaborative process.

3. Starting Conditions: Motivations behind the Partnership

The incentives of the collaborators to participate in the implementation of SGP can be highlighted dually. On the one hand, the Provincial Government of North Gyeongsang, in coordination with SGF

and KOICA, were motivated to sponsor the collaborative governance in SGP due to the globalization of SMU, the campaign to share the development narratives of South Korea to developing countries, and exchange of intangible resources such as cultural exchange and governance legitimacy. On the other hand, the municipal government of San Felipe and the villagers of Balincaguig were driven to participate in collaborative governance due to the village's pre-existing economic situation. Balincaguig is the most economically deprived village in the municipality of San Felipe before the arrival of the SGP. Additionally, the leadership of former Mayor Carolyn Fariñas has significantly ignited the collaboration and stated, "If you really want to improve your community, you really need partners. You cannot always rely on your own fund; it will always be lacking. There are just so many partners along the way. They will discover you and will support you" (Fariñas, 2019).

4. Collaborative Process in the Implementation of SGP

The collaborative process represents the implementation phase and procedures in the planning, negotiation, operation, and evaluation of the SGP. In the implementation of SGP, it has been determined that the collaborative process is cyclical or iterative, rather than linear. The project was conducted for five years of preparation, planning, decision making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. In consideration of the successful implementation of the project, this study uses the collaborative process variables as the measurement indicators of the effective collaboration between the key actors. This study highlights the face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment to the process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes observed or performed in the project's implementation.

4.1 Face-to-Face Dialogue

Communication is at the heart of collaboration, and face-to-face dialogue is the most fundamental indicator of effective collaboration. It includes regular meetings, gatherings, and discussions among the project participants and facilitators. In the case of SGP, this study considers the number of formal meetings, informal gatherings, and other modes of discussion between the key actors by consulting on the minutes of the meetings and other related documentation. According to the interview with the project participants, the face-to-face dialogue is divided into committee meetings and open forums. On the one hand, committee meetings were participated by the top and mid-tier collaborators such as the government officials from San Felipe, SGF volunteers, and KOICA leaders. On the other hand, all the involved actors in the implementation, including the Balincaguig village leaders and citizens, have attended the open forums. Figure 2 highlights the committee meetings and open forums conducted in the implementation of SGP.



Figure 2. Open forum with Balincaguing villagers (left);
Committee meeting with Saemaul leaders (right)

Source: Fariñas (2019)

4.2 Trust-Building

As far as SGP is concerned, trust-building is measured based on the key actors' perceived relations and satisfaction. The interviewees were individually asked about their perception and satisfaction while working with the other collaboration participants. In terms of perception, the interviewees were given two options: positive or negative. Meanwhile, the satisfaction rating is based on three choices: highly satisfied, satisfied, unsatisfied. Based on the interviewees' feedback about their perception and satisfaction, San Felipe's government officials, Balincaguing village leaders, and Korean volunteers have recognized the process positively, and all were highly satisfied with the cooperative management and administration of SGP. Table 3 summarizes the response of the interviewees.

Table 3. Perception and Satisfaction of the Interviewees in the Collaboration for SGP

Key Actor	Perception	Satisfaction
Atty. Carolyn S. Fariñas	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Conrado Aldaba Jr.	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Rowel Villanueva	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Napeleon Domingo	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Ms. Cynthia Abdon	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Jesse Dansalan	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Ms. Evelyn Farala	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Lee Kyung Bok	Positive	Highly Satisfied
Mr. Park Kyung Soon	Positive	Highly Satisfied

Source: Author's interview with the key-informants

4.3 Commitment to Process

Aside from trust-building, commitment to the process is a challenging indicator to measure. In consideration of SGP, this study highlights the performance of the key actors' tasks as an indicator of commitment to the process. It is measured based on the stakeholders' responsibilities and their functions in the negotiation, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Each actor monitors the performances of the members of the collaboration. A check and balances system was established to ensure that there is a commitment among the participants. Each actor checks other members' performance to guarantee that the institutional guidelines are strictly followed, and power/resource imbalances are prevented. The engagement level of the collaborators is measured on their task performance.

4.4 Shared Understanding

Shared understanding refers to the joint mission, ground, purpose, aims, and objectives among the collaboration participants. In SGP, the key actors' commonalities refer to the improvement of aid effectiveness, self-reliance, sustainable growth, active participation, and generation of livelihood opportunities. As Mayor Carolyn Fariñas stated, the citizens of Balincaguig are known to be laidback, flawed, and lacking in motivation, but the Koreans' arrival made a considerable impact on the mentality and perception of life among the villagers. Meanwhile, Ms. Cynthia Abdon mentioned that before implementing SGP, women in the village are only limited to household opportunities. Upon implementing the project, women were given different income-generating jobs such as sewing, waterlily weaving, organic farming, and the like. Also, Mr. Jesse Dansalan mentioned that gambling is a popular leisure activity for the villagers before implementing the project, most especially during the year's non-farming seasons. However, the provision of livelihood projects from the Koreans changed the recreational endeavors of the Balincaguig people into more productive and income-generating ventures.

4.5 Intermediate Outcomes

The intermediate outcomes refer to the initial benefits observed and earned in the collaboration that dictated the project's success. The key actors were asked about the gains and assistance they have attained in implementing SGP, which motivated them in their continuous pursuance in participating in the project. According to an interview with Mr. Rowel Villanueva, the initial benefits he obtained during the first years of implementing the project pertains to the leadership training of SGF and the value formation of self-help, diligence, and cooperation. As a social worker, he gained experience conducting social development projects in the Philippine perspective and the Korean setting. Meanwhile, Mr. Napoleon Domingo affirmed that his continuous collaboration in the project is not because he is mandated to do so but due to his willingness to help Balincaguig village develop under the leadership of SMU. As a volunteer, Mr. Park Kyung Soon stated that his engagement in the collaboration is a life fulfillment and experience that cannot be replaced by any material possession.

Analysis and Findings

1. Application of the Theoretical Model of Collaborative Governance

The Theoretical Model of Collaborative Governance by Ansell and Gash (2008) is chosen as the study's operational framework due to its correspondence in the collaboration of the SGP implementation in Balincaguing village, Philippines. The starting conditions that generate the collaboration refer to the globalization of SMU and the pre-existing socio-economic condition of Balincaguing. These antecedents served as the motivation and grounds for the trans-local government collaboration between North Gyeongsang and San Felipe.

The facilitative leaders in the collaboration are composed of the municipal government of San Felipe, Balincaguing village leaders and residents, SGF, KOICA, and the provincial government of North Gyeongsang. These key actors and institutions are the enablers and catalysts of the collaboration and the project proponents and managers of SGP. The institutional design of the collaboration for SGP pertains to the ground rules and protocols and implementation guidelines that allowed and authorized the collaborative process. The rules and protocols are the formal documents such as Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

In terms of the collaborative process, the face-to-face dialogue refers to formal meetings, informal gatherings, and open forums among the collaboration members. Trust-building in implementing SGP is measured based on high satisfaction and positive perception of the project facilitators. Commitment to process is assessed through the performance of tasks and responsibilities among the stakeholders. The shared understanding pertains to the commonalities and values learned and acquired during the collaboration. The intermediate outcomes include the project participants' initial benefits and gains, which determined the collaboration after a series of monitoring and evaluation. In applying all the variables of the Theoretical Model of Collaboration by Ansell and Gash (2008) in the trans-local government collaboration of North Gyeongsang and San Felipe towards implementing the SGP, the figure below illustrates the operational framework of the study.

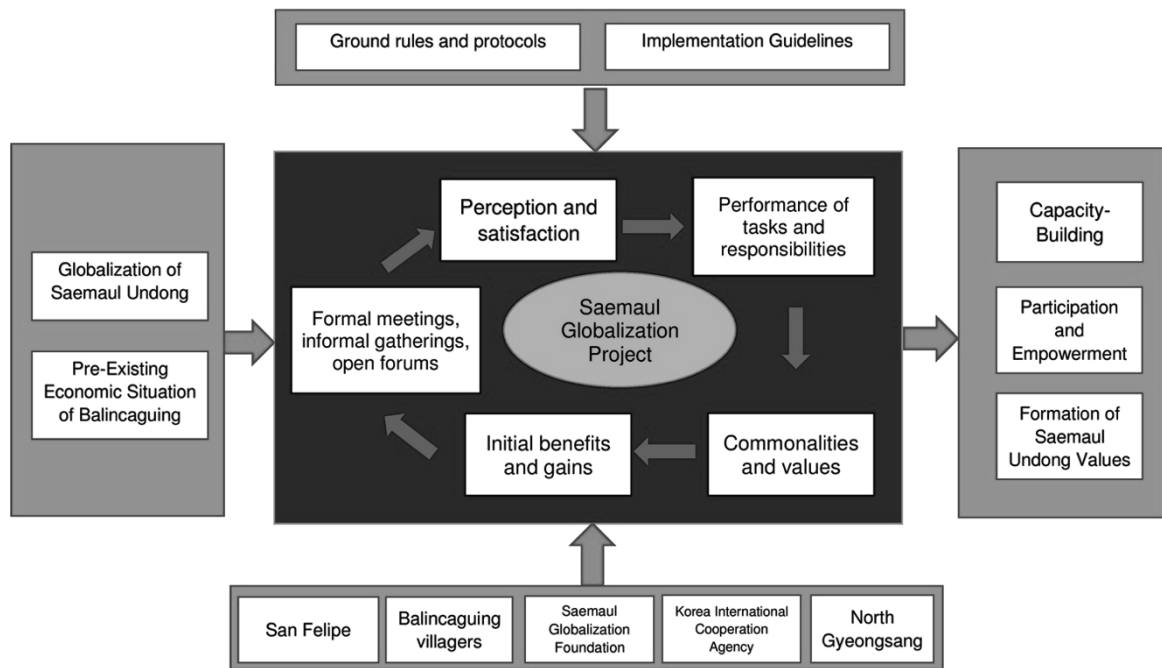


Figure 3. Trans-Local Government Collaboration in the Implementation of SGP in Balincaguig (Rollo, 2019)

Source: Author's depiction of the collaborative governance for the SGP in Balincaguig

2. Outcomes of the Collaboration

Among the outcomes that contributed to the participants' collaboration are capacity-building in terms of skills, knowledge, equipment, other resources, active participation and collective empowerment, and the Saemaul spirit's formation.

Firstly, the capacity-building for SGP is a two-way setting not only participated by the Koreans but also the Filipinos. On one hand, the Korean volunteers, KOICA leaders, and SGF officials have offered capacity-building to Balincaguig villagers through leadership training, seminar, provision of livelihood opportunities, and infrastructure projects. On the other hand, the Filipinos have provided cultural exchange with the Koreans and legitimize the application of SGP to developing countries. Although the capacity-building attained by the Koreans and Filipinos are short-term, its scope is multi-dimensional. Among the activities shared in SGP are training and education, capital resourcing, strategic planning, and fiscal management.

Secondly, active participation and collective empowerment are other favorable outcomes in the successful implementation and effective collaboration for SGP. In the post-implementation of the project, Balincaguig villagers have transformed from passive recipients to active participants of development projects. Although the SGP in Balincaguig has been concluded, the flow of projects sponsored by the Philippine government and the local government units (LGUs) have been continuous.

The Balincaguing villagers are now partners of development in maximizing and utilizing several projects to benefit the community.

Thirdly, exporting the SMU values is the primary goal of the facilitation of SGP in developing countries. The values of self-help, diligence, and cooperation are the guiding principles of the project. It is stated that the unique characteristic of SGP compared to other rural development projects is the spiritual reform brought by the SMU values to the project beneficiaries. The Saemaul spirit has provided ideological guidance among the participants of the collaboration. The "can-do" mindset was endorsed through SGP and has encouraged consistent thinking of optimism towards achieving goals for the project. Moreover, the SMU values have converted the selfish, self-defeat, and helpless behavior of the villagers.

3. Evaluation of the Collaborative Governance

In evaluating the collaboration for the implementation of SGP in Balincaguing village, an assessment and limitation of relationships, processes, and outcomes are considered. In this study, the measurement indicators of effective collaboration are based on the Theoretical Model of Collaborative Governance by Ansell and Gash (2008). Based on the data collected, the factors in the effective collaboration in the implementation of SGP are (1) face-to-face dialogue, (2) trust-building, (3) commitment to the process, (4) shared understanding, (5) intermediate outcomes.

One measurement indicator for effective collaboration among the participants is the face-to-face dialogue. Based on the interviews, all of the respondents stated that there was an adequate amount of committee meetings and open forums among the collaboration participants. It is found that the discussions were inclusive and participated by the involved actors from the top to lowest-tier, such as the government officials of San Felipe, SGF and KOICA leaders, Korean volunteers, and Balincaguing residents. The interviewees also stated that the overall implementation was successful despite the meetings' varying frequency and spontaneity. It is revealed that the forums and gatherings were effective communication channels among the participants of the collaboration to identify the projects to be implemented and to assess the impact and issues of SGP.

In this study, trust-building is measured based on the satisfaction and perception of the collaborators. Following the interview and focus group discussions, the project participants are highly satisfied with the collaboration and positively perceive the project. All of the respondents recognized the importance of trust as a long-term commitment throughout the five-year implementation of SGP. Hence, the collaboration of SGP is considered effective due to the participants' trust characterized by a strong bond, commitment, and relations among the participants.

Commitment to the collaborative process is measured based on the executed responsibilities and performed functions in the implementation of SGP. The tasks are sub-divided into four critical

components: planning, negotiation, implementation, and evaluation. Based on the project participants' performance task, the collaboration for SGP is effective due to the checks and balances system. Through the system, each member was able to monitor and evaluate the commitment of other members.

Another critical factor that is vital in evaluating the collaboration for SGP is the shared understanding among the project proponents and facilitators. It is revealed that the collaboration is significant due to the common mission, ground, purpose, aims, and objectives that guided the key actors in the successful implementation of the project. Due to shared vision, ideology, and strategic direction in the implementation process, the collaboration went smoothly, and favorable outcomes were generated.

The intermediate outcomes signify the continuous flow of the collaboration. It is found that the initial benefits of the collaboration made the overall implementation of the project continuous and cyclical. According to the interviewees, the collaboration's benefits and gains are both in material and ideational forms. The material gains consist of the infrastructures and livelihood opportunities, while the ideational benefits pertain to the SMU values of self-help, diligence, and cooperation learned by the project recipients.

4. Limitations of the Collaborative Governance

Although the collaborative process in implementing SGP is successful, there are challenges and limitations, which threatened and restricted the cycle of collaborations to pursue. The interviewees highlighted such difficulties as follows: (1) overlapping priorities, (2) loss of interest due to the demand for instant benefits, (3) miscommunication due to language barriers, (4) cultural differences.

Overlapping of priorities became inevitable among Balincaguig residents. Besides participating in the implementation of SGP, they also have to attend to their primary income source. Some of the villagers have no time to participate in the collaboration due to multiple household responsibilities.

Loss of interest due to demand for instant benefits also influenced the villagers' initial participation and non-participation. Some Balincaguig residents lacked enthusiasm in the collaborative process since they demand immediate outcomes due to their pre-existing economic situation. However, the latter years of the project were participated by the villagers regardless of their priorities and multiple responsibilities.

The interviewees, particularly the Balincaguig village leaders and citizens, also noted the differences in language and culture, making the project implementation slightly complicated. Some of the Korean volunteers and Balincaguig villagers cannot converse in English. Meanwhile, in terms of culture, Koreans are known to be hands-on and meticulous in their work ethics. On the contrary, Balincaguig residents are laid back and lacks dynamism due to their economic conditions. Despite such complications, the other actors made efforts to resolve the barriers and acted as mediator

between the volunteers and the villagers.

Conclusion

At the very core, this study aims to examine a non-traditional approach of international development assistance in the form of trans-local government collaboration. In particular, this paper cites the Saemaul Globalization Project (SGP) implementation in Balincaguig village collaborated by the local governments of North Gyeongsang, South Korea, and San Felipe, The Philippines. The SGP is successfully implemented from 2012 to 2016. The project participants' collaboration is measured based on five critical variables: face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment to the process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes.

Based on the analysis and findings, the successful implementation and administration of SGP are influenced by the effective trans-local government collaboration of North Gyeongsang and San Felipe in terms of the following: (1) constant and consultative communication through an adequate number of formal meetings and open forums, (2) positive perception and high satisfaction among key actors in the collaboration, (3) commitment to perform of tasks and functions, (4) value formation and shared understanding, and (5) the initial gains and benefits from the project which made the collaboration iterative and cyclical. With these in mind, it is concluded that an effective trans-local government collaboration is a supplemental approach for international development assistance and a determining factor in the successful implementation of rural development programs.

Recommendations

In terms of theoretical recommendations, this research has utilized the Theoretical Model of Collaborative Governance by Ansell & Gash (2008) in consideration of the variables necessary and applicable in the case of the Saemaul Globalization Project in Balincaguig village, Philippines. Hence, this study recommends considering the other critical factors when the Collaborative Governance Model for SGP Brgy. Balincaguig (Rollo, 2019) is applied in other Saemaul pilot villages. What has worked in Balincaguig may not be successful in other Saemaul pilot villages. Moreover, this research is not limited to collaborative governance as the theoretical explanation of the collaboration for the implementation of SGP or other rural development projects. Thus, this study recommends using other theories or models explaining the phenomena of trans-local government collaboration as a supplemental approach for international development assistance.

For policy recommendations, this study advises the central government to improve the rural sector's development in the Philippines continuously. Although the Filipino population residing in rural areas has been decreasing incrementally, its growth and progress are unstable, and there are still underdeveloped regions. Given the rural development sector reform, local governments would not

need to resort to foreign assistance and heavy dependence on external funds. It is also recommended that the central government develop the human resource and fiscal capacities of local governments in local planning and project development and utilization of public investment funds other than direct ODA grants.

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