



RANIAG ARINGAY: PROBING INTO THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE OF ARINGAY, LA UNION

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Abstract

Local governments play a critical role in delivering services to the public. It is the forefront of delivering and providing the public services on which citizens rely, and performance is thus of both timely and enduring importance to researchers, policymakers, and citizens alike. This study examines the performance of the local governance of Aringay, a 2nd class municipality in La Union, within its socio-economic and political framework. The study aims to evaluate constituents' perceptions of governance effectiveness and to identify exemplary practices among local officials. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through surveys on constituents and interviews with local government officials. Findings indicate a high-level perception of performance on ten governance areas, resulting in strengths from community engagement, transparency, accountability, and resource allocation. Challenges persist in staffing and infrastructure, underscoring the relationship between local government initiatives and citizen awareness. A proposed performance framework was developed to extract performance successes.

Keywords: best practices, level of performance, local governance, local government units, mixed method, Municipality of Aringay

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Introduction

Governance is now fashionable, but the concept is as old as human history (Bevir, 2011). The perception of governance has been in human civilization since the time that the people learned how to live in one community or society through the process of making decisions and implementations of certain laws, rules, and policies in order to live orderly and harmoniously in one environment. However, the term good governance has acquired prominence in the context of revitalization of democratic institutions in order to ensure participatory democracy, human development and to attain the goals of globalization (Ali, 2015).

The terms governance and good governance are increasingly being used in development literature (Allen, 2024). Many academics and international practitioners employ governance to connote a complex set of structures and processes, both public and private, while more popular writers tend to use it synonymously with government (Weiss, 2010). Governance refers to characteristics that are generally associated with a system of national administration. Here, governance is act, manner, office, or power of governing; government, state of being governed, or method of government or regulation (Ysa & Albareda, 2014). As such, it is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest (Keping, 2017).

Eventually, the United Development Programme (UNDP) expounded the meaning of “governance” to “good governance” by addressing bad governance which includes the failures by the government to provide good and efficient public services (Mayo-Doculan, 2022). When it comes to state duty to provide governance to the masses, they should perform in an effective manner at all tiers of the government. Unfortunately, but evidently, bad governance exists in the form of corruption, institutional crashes, constitutional disaster, absence of proper system of check and balance, poor condition of law and order (Muhammadi, 2017).

Johnston (2023) stated that good governance is competent management of a country’s resources and affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people’s needs. Moreover, decentralization of political and economic power is the core of good governance. The power should not be concentrated at the center but needs to be developed to the local institutions. It is assumed that decentralization will ensure democracy and development, and both are preconditions to good governance. The power within a political system characterizes good governance. In short, it can be said that here that the good is not a static concept. In more specific terms good governance may be defined as that which “applies to the exercise of power in a variety of institutional contexts, the object of which is to direct, control, and regulate activities in the interests of people as citizens, voters and workers. Hence, good governance is that which fosters human development through popular participation and social and economic equalities (Ali, 2015).

Good governance has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present



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and future needs of society. The countries that are good at these indicators, their governance is termed 'good' (UNESCAP, 2024). Moreover, on the basis of these governance indicators, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations Development Program gauge the performance of every country in its social, economic, and political fields (Muhammadi, 2017).

Despite this understanding, one of the reasons why many countries fail to achieve their Millennium Development Goals is poor governance (UNDP, 2015). If governance is such an important factor in the development of a country, then it is crucial to understand the specific factors leading to poor government performance and how to measure and improve it (Adriano & Estimida, 2014). There is a notable lack of research focused on the effectiveness of local governance structures, particularly in developing countries, where local governments play a vital role in implementing policies and delivering services. This gap highlights the need for more nuanced studies that consider local contexts and the unique challenges faced by these governments.

The primary objective of this study is to determine constituents' perceptions of governance effectiveness in Aringay. This study aims to investigate the relationship between local governance practices and community engagement, while also evaluating the challenges faced by the local government in service delivery. Additionally, the research seeks to identify exemplary practices among local officials that contribute to effective governance. Another key objective is to assess the impact of local governance on the socio-economic development of the municipality. Finally, this study intends to provide recommendations for improving governance practices based on the findings.

This study aimed to probe the performance of the local governance of Aringay, La Union. It assessed the constituents' perceptions and the practices of the local government unit. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions; 1) What is the level of performance of Aringay as perceived by its constituents along with the following governance areas: a) Good Fiscal or Financial Administration or Financial Sustainability; b) Disaster Preparedness; c) Social Protection and Sensitivity Program; d) Health Compliance and Responsiveness; e) Programs for Sustainable Education; f) Business Friendliness Competitiveness; g) Safety, Peace and Order; h) Environmental Management; i) Tourism, Heritage Development, Culture and Arts; and j) Youth Development? 2) What are the best practices of the LGU of Aringay in the ten governance areas? 3) What proposed framework can be developed to enhance the performance for the second-class municipalities of La Union?

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-method approach using sequential explanatory research design to explore the performance of Aringay, La Union. This design integrates both quantitative and qualitative data, beginning with the analysis of quantitative findings to inform qualitative insights about the local government's performance. The quantitative method assesses constituents' perceptions across ten governance areas, while the qualitative method identifies best practices. This two-stage approach allows for a deeper exploration of the results, as it first collects and analyzes quantitative data and then follows up with qualitative data to further explain the findings, thereby enriching the understanding of the local governance context in Aringay.



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The researchers utilized a mixed-method approach to determine the participants for this study. For the quantitative part, the study utilized purposive sampling to determine the number of participants. The participants of the study were from the selected barangays in the Municipality of Aringay, La Union namely: Poblacion, San Benito Sur, Alaska, Samara, San Antonio, Pangao-aoan East, Gallano, and Macabato. On the other hand, the criteria set for the participants were: (1) a college graduate, (2) a bona fide resident since 2018, and (3) willingness to participate. For the qualitative part, the study involved 13 members of the SGLG Technical Working Group, including heads of offices responsible for the ten governance areas, led by the municipal mayor.

The researchers employed researcher-made surveys and semi-structured interviews as their primary methods for data collection. The survey was based on the Citizen's Satisfaction Index Survey (CSIS) from the DILG, assessed the performance of the LGU of Aringay as perceived by constituents across ten governance areas. The semi-structured interviews provided qualitative validation of the quantitative results. To ensure the survey instrument's validity, experts from the DILG were consulted, resulting in a validity score of 4.56 with a descriptive equivalent of Very High Validity. Language experts assisted in translating the survey questionnaire, and modifications were made based on their feedback. Ethical clearance was obtained from the DMMMSU Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection. Following approval, the researchers distributed the questionnaires on-site and recorded interview responses for accuracy. Informed consent was secured from participants, ensuring they understood their involvement, while the flexibility of scheduling allowed respondents to participate without disruption. The study adhered to RA 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring confidentiality of the collected data.

The collected data were tabulated and analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2021. For the first problem, which assesses the level of performance of the LGU of Aringay as perceived by constituents across ten governance areas, results were interpreted using mode with a 4-Point Likert Scale. For the second problem regarding best practices of the LGU of Aringay, thematic analysis was employed to interpret the semi-structured interview results. This qualitative analysis method involved classifying common responses by assigning codes to systematically organize the data into meaningful categories, focusing on identifying patterns and deriving themes relevant to the research.

Findings

Results/Findings

Level of Performance of Aringay as Perceived by its Constituents on the Ten Governance Areas

Good Fiscal or Financial Administration or Financial Sustainability. The LGU of Aringay has demonstrated a very high level of performance in financial administration, achieving an overall median rating of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality effectively showcases transparency and accountability in public fund usage, actively engages citizens in budget preparation, frequently posts budget information, and ensures that financial reports are accessible and accurate. This strong financial performance reflects the LGU's commitment to fiscal discipline and transparency, essential for delivering basic services as mandated by the Local Government Code.

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Disaster Preparedness. In terms of disaster preparedness, the LGU of Aringay received a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality's effective response to potential hazards, efficient early warning systems, and well-prepared evacuation centers demonstrate a robust disaster management framework. This proactive mobilization of resources aligns with national guidelines and emphasizes the importance of local planning and execution in disaster risk reduction.

Table 1. Good Fiscal or Financial Administration or Financial Sustainability

Item	Governance Areas Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality effectively demonstrates transparency and accountability in the usage of public funds.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The municipality ensures the engagement of citizens to prepare their proposed budgets.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The municipality frequently posts the annual budget in the Full Disclosure Board.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The municipality ensures that the financial reports accessible to the public are promptly and accurately provided.</i>	4.00	VH

Table 2. Disaster Preparedness

Item	Governance Areas Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality effectively responds to potential risks and hazards through its disaster preparedness system.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The municipality's early warning and evacuation alert system efficiently notifies, and guides affected people during emergencies.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The evacuation centers and emergency transportation facilities in the municipality are adequately prepared to accommodate and transport individuals during disasters.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The municipality ensures the availability and accessibility of relief operation equipment and tools, enabling an effective response during calamities.</i>	4.00	VH
5	<i>The medical services provided by the municipality during disasters are accessible and sufficient to meet the needs of affected individuals.</i>	4.00	VH
6	<i>The municipality has well-established security measures and procedures in place to ensure the safety of residents during calamities.</i>	4.00	VH
7	<i>The municipality is highly effective in providing disaster information, and preparation measures through its local government.</i>	4.00	VH
8	<i>The barangay disaster response team in the municipality is well-equipped and trained to handle disaster situations to a significant extent.</i>	4.00	VH
9	<i>The provincial disaster response team in the municipality is prepared and coordinated to a considerable extent in responding to disasters.</i>	4.00	VH
10	<i>The municipal disaster response team in the municipality is well-prepared and organized in handling emergency situations.</i>	4.00	VH
11	<i>The barangay tanod volunteers in the municipality makes a significant contribution to community safety and disaster response efforts.</i>	4.00	VH

Social Protection and Sensitivity. The LGU of Aringay achieved a very high rating in social protection, with an overall median of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality effectively addresses the needs of vulnerable populations, including children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, through various programs such as financial assistance and accessible services. This demonstrates the LGU's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of marginalized sectors, reflecting a comprehensive approach to social welfare.

Table 3. *Social Protection and Sensitivity Program*

Item	Governance Areas Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality ensures the accessibility and effectiveness of day care services/centers for children and working parents.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The services for senior citizens and the elderly in the municipality meet their specific needs to a significant extent.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The financial assistance program in the municipality provides substantial support to individuals and families during financial hardship.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The pre-marriage/marriage counseling and family planning/responsible parenthood services are accessible and effective in the municipality.</i>	4.00	VH
5	<i>The livelihood and skills development programs in the municipality are successful in empowering individuals and fostering economic growth.</i>	4.00	VH
6	<i>The services for vulnerable children in the municipality are comprehensive and supportive.</i>	4.00	VH
7	<i>The programs for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in the municipality promote inclusivity and significantly improve their quality of life.</i>	4.00	VH
8	<i>The services for women and gender-related concerns in the municipality are effective in addressing their needs and promoting gender equality.</i>	4.00	VH
9	<i>The VAWC Desk (Violence Against Women and Children Desk) in the municipality functions well in addressing cases and providing support to victims.</i>	4.00	VH

Health Compliance and Responsiveness. The municipality's performance in health compliance and responsiveness received an overall median rating of 4.00, signifying effective healthcare delivery. The LGU ensures accessibility to essential health services, including a Free Basic Medicine Program and comprehensive reproductive health services. These initiatives reflect a dedication to maintaining high healthcare standards and addressing the community's needs, particularly during health crises.

Table 4. *Health Compliance and Responsiveness*

Item	Governance Area Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality's Free Basic Medicine or Low-cost Medicine Program ensures the accessibility and effectiveness of providing affordable medication to the community.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The local medical/health service center in the municipality significantly meets the healthcare needs of the community during sickness.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The Family Planning/Reproductive Health services provided in the municipality are comprehensive and effective in promoting reproductive health and family planning choices.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The distribution of reproductive health supplies and dissemination of information in the municipality strongly supports reproductive health education and access to resources.</i>	4.00	VH
5	<i>The prevention and management efforts for communicable and non-communicable diseases in the community are successful in the municipality.</i>	3.75	VH
6	<i>The vaccination program for infants/children in the municipality is accessible and well-implemented, promoting immunization.</i>	4.00	VH
7	<i>The availability of local medical/health service providers in the municipality greatly contributes to accessible healthcare during sickness.</i>	4.00	VH
8	<i>The basic dental/oral hygiene services provided to the community are accessible and comprehensive in the municipality.</i>	4.00	VH
9	<i>The pre-natal/post-natal/childbirth services in the municipality are effective in ensuring safe care for mothers and newborns.</i>	4.00	VH

Programs for Sustainable Education. The LGU of Aringay exhibits a very high level of performance in sustainable education, with an overall median rating of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality's

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support for educational initiatives, such as sports programs, scholarships, and infrastructure development, highlights its commitment to creating a conducive learning environment for students. This reflects an understanding of education's vital role in community development and individual empowerment.

Table 5. *Programs for Sustainable Education*

Item	Governance Area Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality's sports programs are comprehensive and engaging, effectively promoting physical fitness and well-being among students.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The support provided for the construction, maintenance, and repair of school buildings and facilities in the municipality creates a conducive learning environment and is highly effective</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The scholarships and financial assistance programs in the municipality are accessible and have a significant impact in supporting students' educational pursuits.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The provision of supplementary teachers, educational materials, supplies, and necessities in public schools greatly enhances the quality of education in the municipality.</i>	4.00	VH
5	<i>The provision of technical equipment such as laboratory instruments and computers in the municipality effectively promotes hands-on learning and technological literacy among students.</i>	4.00	VH
6	<i>The medical and/or nutritional services provided in school clinics in the municipality are comprehensive and accessible, supporting students' health and well-being effectively.</i>	4.00	VH

Business Friendliness and Competitiveness. In the area of business friendliness and competitiveness, the LGU of Aringay received a very high rating, achieving an overall median of 4.00. The municipality promotes economic opportunities through supportive legislation, efficient business processing, and updates to the Citizen's Charter that enhance public service delivery. These efforts indicate a strategic focus on fostering a conducive environment for local businesses, demonstrating the LGU's commitment to economic growth.

Active work to attract investments and create employment opportunities aligns with the principles of entrepreneurial governance outlined by Osborne and Gaebler (1992). By streamlining processes and ensuring fair practices, the LGU enhances local economic activity and empowers citizens to participate in economic development. This approach reflects a broader vision of sustainable growth that benefits the entire community.

Table 6. *Business Friendliness and Competitiveness*

Item		Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality effectively promotes economic opportunities and sustainable livelihoods through its livelihood programs.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The municipality ensures compliance and promotes fair practices through its regulation and supervision of businesses.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The municipality's simplified business processing and licensing system efficiently facilitates ease of doing business.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The municipality updates the Citizen's Charter that significantly improves public service delivery and transparency.</i>	4.00	VH

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Safety, Peace and Order. The performance of the LGU in maintaining safety, peace, and order received a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality demonstrates effective implementation of safety measures, crime prevention programs, and community-oriented policing initiatives, which collectively contribute to a secure environment for residents. This proactive stance in addressing public safety concerns showcases the LGU's commitment to protecting its constituents.

Table 7. *Safety, Peace and Order*

Item		Mean	DR
1	The Fire Prevention Brigade in the municipality, along with the fire prevention volunteers, play an effective role in preventing fires.	4.00	VH
2	The crime prevention program, including information campaigns, in the municipality contributes to reducing crime rates to a significant extent.	4.00	VH
3	The municipality provides logistical or financial support to the local police.	4.00	VH
4	The municipality has effectively adopted a Peace and Order and Public Safety Plan.	4.00	VH
5	The municipality provides adequate logistical or financial support to the local police.	4.00	VH
6	The municipality convenes the local Peace and Order Council regularly.	4.00	VH
7	The municipality has established a functional local Anti-Drug Abuse Council.	4.00	VH
8	The municipality has implemented a community-oriented policing mechanism.	4.00	VH

Environmental Management. The LGU of Aringay received a very high rating in environmental management, with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality effectively implements pollution control programs, waste management practices, and community greening initiatives, reflecting a commitment to preserving the environment. These efforts indicate the LGU's proactive measures to promote sustainability and ecological balance within the community.

Table 8. *Environmental Management*

Item		Mean	DR
1	The municipality effectively implements the Pollution Control Program, leading to a significant reduction and management of pollution levels.	4.00	VH
2	The municipality ensures the implementation of waste segregation practices (biodegradable vs non-biodegradable) to a considerable extent within the community.	4.00	VH
3	The municipality's community-based greening projects, particularly tree-planting initiatives, have a substantial impact on promoting a greener environment.	4.00	VH
4	The Environmental Protection Programs in the municipality are designed to promote the conservation and preservation of the environment to a significant extent.	4.00	VH
5	The municipality's Water Waste Management Programs are highly effective in ensuring proper management and treatment of water waste.	4.00	VH
6	The Clean-up Programs/Projects organized by the municipality significantly contribute to maintaining cleanliness and sanitation in the community.	4.00	VH
7	The municipality has a well-implemented waste collection system to ensure proper disposal and management of waste.	4.00	VH

Tourism, Heritage Development, Culture and the Arts. The performance of the LGU in tourism, heritage development, culture, and the arts received a very high rating with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality effectively implements safety measures in tourism areas, promotes local attractions, and ensures compliance in tourism-related establishments. This commitment to preserving cultural heritage



while enhancing tourism reflects the LGU's dedication to both economic development and community identity.

Table 9. *Tourism, Heritage Development, Culture and the Arts*

Item		Mean	DR
1	<i>The municipality ensures the effective implementation of safety and security measures in tourism areas to ensure the well-being and protection of visitors.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The Tourism Marketing and Promotions Assistance Program effectively promotes tourism and attracts visitors to a significant extent.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>The development and maintenance of tourist attractions and facilities are well-managed in order to provide a positive visitor experience.</i>	4.00	VH
4	<i>The Ecotourism Program and/or Natural Conservation Programs contribute to the preservation of natural resources and biodiversity to a considerable extent.</i>	3.50	VH
5	<i>The regulation and supervision of tourism-related establishments effectively ensure compliance with standards and regulations to maintain quality and safety for tourists.</i>	4.00	VH

Youth Development. In the area of youth development, the LGU of Aringay achieved a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00. The active presence of the Local Youth Development Council and comprehensive youth programs demonstrates the LGU's commitment to addressing the needs and concerns of young individuals. Such initiatives promote meaningful participation of the youth in local governance and community activities.

Table 10. *Youth Development*

Item	Governance Area Indicators	Mean	DR
1	<i>The Local Youth Development Council is actively present and engaged in addressing the needs and concerns of the youth in the community to a significant extent.</i>	4.00	VH
2	<i>The youth-related programs or activities implemented are comprehensive and impactful, promoting the holistic development of young individuals effectively.</i>	4.00	VH
3	<i>Youth are involved and encouraged to participate in community development initiatives and decision-making processes to a considerable extent.</i>	4.00	VH

Best Practices of the LGU on the Ten (10) Governance Areas



Fig 1. Thematic Practices of the on the Ten (10)

Map of the Best LGU Governance Areas

Good Leadership. This theme encapsulates the clarity in what good performance represents and clear role purpose. It involves the ability to lead through action, setting a positive example that encourages others to achieve collective goals. The actions and achievements of the LGU of Aringay demonstrate that positive examples create lasting impacts in governance by promoting transparency, preparedness, and growth. The LGU's commitment to responsible resource management, strategic disaster preparedness, and operational initiatives fosters economic development and drives progress, establishing a culture of excellence that benefits communities.

Development. This theme centers on the pursuit of progress that goes beyond basic standards. The LGU actively strives for improvement and innovation, emphasizing that true progress involves exceeding minimum requirements. The Municipal Planning and Development Officer plays a crucial role in steering development, ensuring that barangay officials are adequately trained to formulate and execute plans aligned with community needs. The LGU is committed to going beyond mandated functions, adapting initiatives to meet local contexts effectively.

Decentralization. This theme discusses the LGU's transfer of public service management practices to local bodies, allowing them to prioritize programs based on community needs. The LGU established a network of barangay leaders responsible for identifying and addressing emerging issues, creating a direct and localized service delivery system. The encouragement of the Purok System, which includes satellite coordinators in remote areas, enhances communication and ensures information reaches all community segments.

Campaigns. This theme demonstrates the LGU's commitment to advancing local governance excellence through strategic campaigns initiated by leaders. These campaigns address specific social challenges by mobilizing resources and involving stakeholders to ensure services reach vulnerable populations. The leadership of the Municipal Health Officer in creating the "Baddek ni Aringay Health



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Program” exemplifies this commitment, emphasizing outreach to connect with residents in need of healthcare support.

Planning. This theme covers the comprehensive development planning process of the LGU, emphasizing a systematic approach to goal setting and resource coordination. Effective planning is critical for equipping all involved and ensuring sustainable, responsive interventions for community benefit. The LGU emphasizes strategic planning, particularly for barangay officials, to ensure they are trained in formulating plans aligned with community needs.

Digitalization. This theme discusses the municipality’s efforts in integrating digital technologies to streamline processes and improve efficiency. The LGU focuses on transforming manual tasks into digital formats, enhancing operational efficiency and service delivery. Key practices include simplifying the business permit process through computerization, which reduces paperwork and facilitates compliance for local businesses.

Collective Enterprises. This theme covers the LGU’s support for cooperatives and collective action to enhance local development and improve livelihoods. The municipality facilitates cooperative efforts in processing and promoting local products, which supports farmers and fisherfolk. Such initiatives foster interconnected systems that drive economic growth in the community.

Practical Solutions. This theme highlights the LGU’s participatory development and preventive practices that prioritize community needs. The municipality implements practical solutions to address immediate concerns and long-term needs, focusing on effective and adaptable strategies. Regular dredging operations in flood-prone areas prevent severe flooding, while infrastructure improvements enhance transportation accessibility.

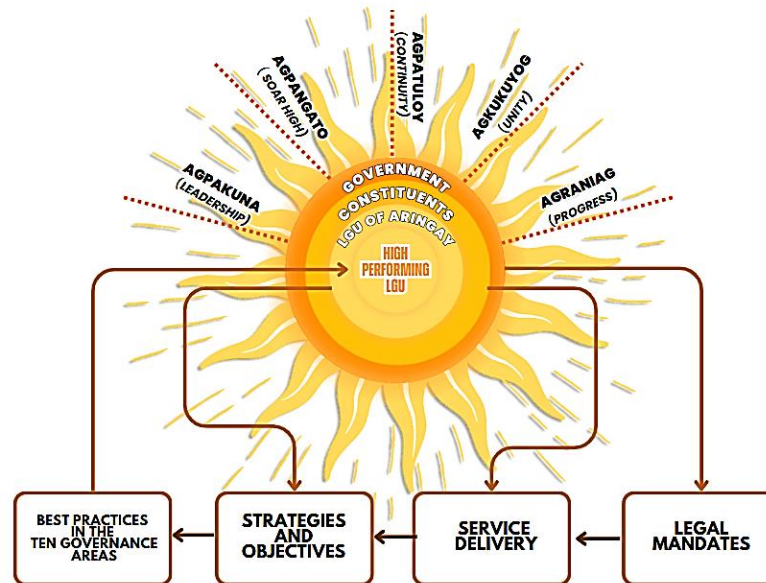
Continuity. This theme emphasizes the LGU’s commitment to long-term solutions that meet the community’s evolving needs. Enacting local ordinances reflects the LGU’s mission to protect vulnerable populations, including children and women. Initiatives for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) demonstrate the LGU’s dedication to providing necessary support and services.

Collaboration. This theme discusses the established relationships among stakeholders in the LGU, emphasizing the importance of collaboration for effective governance. The LGU fosters cooperation across departments to execute programs efficiently, promoting a unified approach to community development. Collaborative practices ensure alignment with legal requirements and enhance project outcomes. Participants noted that strong collaboration among various offices significantly improves governance effectiveness. This synergy, embodied in the municipality’s motto, “Unity in Progress,” illustrates the mutual relationships among stakeholders, vital for achieving positive results in community development.

Diversity and Inclusion. This theme highlights the LGU’s commitment to promoting equality and diversity within the community. The LGU actively works to create a more inclusive local government, recognizing and integrating various community segments. This approach strengthens the social fabric of Aringay, fostering cohesion and progress through inclusive practices and community programs.

Culture Preservation. This theme emphasizes the practices that protect and leverage cultural heritage for local development. The LGU promotes cultural conservation through festivals and community programs, with the “Baddek ni Aringay” festival celebrating local traditions. This festival embodies the

community's cultural identity, fostering pride and engagement. The tourism head's efforts to document the municipality's history reflect the LGU's commitment to cultural preservation. Initiatives to trace and maintain cultural properties underscore the importance of integrating heritage into community life, reinforcing the significance of preserving local culture for future generations.



As a summation of this research undertaking, the researchers designed its own framework (see Figure 2) that highlights the strategies underpinning the performance of the local governance of Aringay. The main premise of the framework highlights the performance of Aringay. Meaning, the LGU of Aringay are expected to fulfill Aringay's 5 A's, namely: Agpatuloy (Continuity), Agpangato (To Soar High), Agpakauna (Leadership), Agkukuyog (Unity), and Agraniag (Progress). In this study, it was shown that the LGU of Aringay have attained a very good performance in performing their duties and responsibilities. Governing is much harder work than people imagine; however, the LGU is guided by their core values that help set the groundwork for their actions and decisions. This core values should be upheld at all times to strengthen strong leadership which promotes effective governing and addresses the needs of all constituents.

The strategies and objectives of the LGU of Aringay was demonstrated because of their capabilities, evidence and data, and pragmatism of the officials. With these, the attraction of strategic objectives as a development and governance strategy is the range of possibilities and opportunities it offers in promoting and achieving good governance and meaningful local development. With power and responsibilities placed in the hands of local authorities, LGUs are compelled and expected to truthfully consider local demands in policymaking and implementation of programs and projects. The responsibility for mobilizing strategies and objectives likewise is also an opportunity to unleash entrepreneurial energies of local government for better and adequate delivery of services.



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High performing organization is the outcome of this framework. It is the advocate for transparency and accountability in governance, positively reinforce good performers, popularize replicable best practices, and identify possible interventions to improve the LGU performance. This framework allows for a more integrated and holistic set of interventions. The dimensions give a systemic perspective of requirements in the performance of specific tasks. In doing so, this framework highlights the well-established rules governing good servant leadership and shows how they truly value their constituents, from whom the Department's mandates emanate. The solid lines in the performance framework represent strong connections among components, illustrating the flow of information and responsibilities.

Discussions

The study's findings probed the performance of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Aringay across ten governance areas, reflecting the perceptions of its constituents. It highlights how effectively the LGU has implemented various programs and initiatives aimed at promoting transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in governance. By examining key indicators, the report provides insights into the LGU's strengths and areas for improvement, emphasizing its commitment to sustainable development and community welfare. The findings underscore the importance of good governance principles as outlined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other relevant frameworks.

The level of performance in financial administration and sustainability received an overall median of 4.00, indicating a very high rating. All four indicators, including transparency and accountability in public fund usage, citizen engagement in budget preparation, and timely posting of financial reports, also received a median of 4.00. This suggests that the LGU of Aringay demonstrates positive financial performance and upholds fiscal discipline, accountability, and transparency, facilitating basic service delivery. This strong adherence to transparency fosters an environment that encourages public participation. By prioritizing transparency, the LGU not only meets recognized accounting standards but also promotes a culture of governance that empowers constituents. This aligns with Castillo and Arniel (2020), who emphasize the importance of public scrutiny and participation in governance, reinforcing community trust and participation in line with good governance principles.

In terms of disaster preparedness, the LGU of Aringay received a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality's effective response to potential hazards, efficient early warning systems, and well-prepared evacuation centers demonstrate a robust disaster management framework. This proactive mobilization of resources aligns with national guidelines and emphasizes the importance of local planning and execution in disaster risk reduction. Such commitment to preparedness reflects a deep understanding of the LGU's role in protecting its constituents. The findings are congruent with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) framework, which emphasizes that LGUs must establish comprehensive disaster management plans. This strategic approach prioritizes long-term community safety and welfare, showcasing the LGU's dedication to disaster risk reduction.

The LGU of Aringay achieved a very high rating in social protection and sensitivity, with an overall median of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality effectively addresses the needs of vulnerable

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populations, including children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, through various programs such as financial assistance and accessible services. This demonstrates the LGU's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of marginalized sectors, reflecting a comprehensive approach to social welfare. Prioritizing community needs and inclusivity aligns with the principles of equity and responsiveness in governance. The findings resonate with the UNDP (1997) framework, which emphasizes that social welfare initiatives should empower marginalized groups. By implementing programs that uplift vulnerable populations, the LGU fosters a supportive environment that encourages active participation, strengthening the social fabric of the community and contributing to overall societal progress.

The municipality's performance in health compliance and responsiveness received an overall median rating of 4.00, signifying effective healthcare delivery. The LGU ensures accessibility to essential health services, including a Free Basic Medicine Program and comprehensive reproductive health services. These initiatives reflect a dedication to maintaining high healthcare standards and addressing the community's needs, particularly during health crises. An integrated approach to health is evident, as the LGU promotes health literacy and proactive service delivery without imposing financial burdens on citizens. This commitment aligns with the UNDP (1997) principles of good governance, ensuring that health resources are utilized effectively. The focus on preventative measures and community engagement in health initiatives underscores the LGU's role as a key player in enhancing public health outcomes.

The LGU of Aringay exhibits a very high level of performance in sustainable education, with an overall median rating of 4.00 across all indicators. The municipality's support for educational initiatives, such as sports programs, scholarships, and infrastructure development, highlights its commitment to creating a conducive learning environment for students. This reflects an understanding of education's vital role in community development and individual empowerment. While education is not solely a devolved function, the LGU actively participates in enhancing educational opportunities through funding and support. The integration of various educational programs demonstrates the LGU's dedication to quality education, aligning with the findings of Nayar (2021) on the importance of holistic approaches to sustainable education.

In the area of business friendliness and competitiveness, the LGU of Aringay received a very high rating, achieving an overall median of 4.00. The municipality promotes economic opportunities through supportive legislation, efficient business processing, and updates to the Citizen's Charter that enhance public service delivery. These efforts indicate a strategic focus on fostering a conducive environment for local businesses, demonstrating the LGU's commitment to economic growth. Active work to attract investments and create employment opportunities aligns with the principles of entrepreneurial governance outlined by Osborne and Gaebler (1992). By streamlining processes and ensuring fair practices, the LGU enhances local economic activity and empowers citizens to participate in economic development. This approach reflects a broader vision of sustainable growth that benefits the entire community.

The performance of the LGU in maintaining safety, peace, and order received a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality demonstrates effective implementation of safety measures, crime prevention programs, and community-oriented policing initiatives, which collectively



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contribute to a secure environment for residents. This proactive stance in addressing public safety concerns showcases the LGU's commitment to protecting its constituents. Such commitment aligns with national policies aimed at enhancing local governance capacity. The findings are supported by NEDA (2023), which emphasizes the government's duty to ensure community safety. By fostering collaboration with local police and community organizations, the LGU ensures a comprehensive approach to safety that protects constituents from threats, enhancing both local security and overall community well-being.

The LGU of Aringay received a very high rating in environmental management, with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality effectively implements pollution control programs, waste management practices, and community greening initiatives, reflecting a commitment to preserving the environment. These efforts indicate the LGU's proactive measures to promote sustainability and ecological balance within the community. Compliance with environmental regulations underscores the LGU's capacity to manage natural resources effectively. This approach aligns with UNESCAP (2021), which advocates for sustainable resource use and environmental protection. By fostering community participation in environmental programs, the LGU enhances ecological awareness and empowers residents to take an active role in protecting their environment.

The performance of the LGU in tourism, heritage development, culture, and the arts received a very high rating with an overall median of 4.00. The municipality effectively implements safety measures in tourism areas, promotes local attractions, and ensures compliance in tourism-related establishments. This commitment to preserving cultural heritage while enhancing tourism reflects the LGU's dedication to both economic development and community identity. Engagement in initiatives that celebrate local culture and heritage fosters a sense of pride among residents. This aligns with findings from the study of Gaivoron (2018), emphasizing the role of cultural preservation in local economic vitality. By promoting tourism as a potential income-generating sector, the LGU not only boosts the local economy but also strengthens community ties through shared cultural experiences.

In the area of youth development, the LGU of Aringay achieved a very high rating, with an overall median of 4.00. The active presence of the Local Youth Development Council and comprehensive youth programs demonstrates the LGU's commitment to addressing the needs and concerns of young individuals. Such initiatives promote meaningful participation of the youth in local governance and community activities. Empowering youth through skills development and engagement in decision-making processes is critical. This aligns with Tisdall's (2013) findings on the importance of youth empowerment in fostering community cohesion. By fostering a supportive environment for youth-led organizations and initiatives, the LGU enhances the capacity of young people to contribute actively to societal progress, reinforcing broader governance goals of inclusivity and active citizenship.

Conclusions

The study concludes that the performance of the LGU of Aringay reflects a strong commitment to integrity and efficiency in delivering public services. This dedication contributes positively to constituents' perceptions, fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. Despite achieving very high ratings



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across all governance areas, there remain opportunities for improvement, particularly in political will and innovative practices among personnel.

To build on these strengths, it is essential for the LGU to embrace a proactive approach to governance that not only addresses current challenges but also anticipates future needs. By fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability, the LGU can better respond to the evolving demands of the community. This involves not only enhancing existing programs and services but also exploring new avenues for engagement and support that reflect the aspirations of the constituents. The commitment to continuous improvement will empower the LGU to maintain its high performance while ensuring that all community members feel valued and included in the governance process.

To enhance local governance further, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Establish comprehensive performance monitoring systems that prioritize citizen engagement and feedback to ensure transparency and accountability.
2. Invest in capacity building for staff through training and workshops to improve their skills in addressing community needs effectively.
3. Regularly evaluate LGU performance and provide constructive feedback to officials for tracking progress.
4. Ensure the LGU remains aware of its objectives and measures success adequately.
5. Use the findings as benchmarks for future assessments and refine the performance framework and indicators accordingly.
6. Develop specific, actionable steps within the established "best practices" tailored to various governance areas.
7. Conduct studies on public supervision to comprehensively measure constituent satisfaction regarding LGU performance.
8. Adopt a model for implementing best practices with clear goals and action items.
9. Explore qualitative studies on constituent experiences in governance areas to identify any overlooked issues in service delivery.

By following these recommendations, the LGU of Aringay can continue to promote data-driven decision-making and strive for continuous improvement in governance.

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