



The Rising of Women in Power: Exploring the Experiences and Challenges Faced by Women Leaders

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Abstract

Women leaders face challenges in their services around the world which has long been a source of curiosity and concern. This paper aimed to analyze women leader's experiences and challenges in delivering basic services and facilities to their constituents. A pure-qualitative approach was utilized, an interviews were conducted among five women Punong Barangays in the Municipality of Aringay, La Union. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, revealing that participants experienced ecological stewardship and community mobilization in environmental services, construction projects in infrastructure, community health worker mobilization in health and social welfare services. The challenges encountered were resource management in environmental services, time optimization, and geographical challenges in infrastructure, healthcare scarcity and community assistance and conflict resolution in health and social welfare. The accomplishments in environmental, infrastructure, and health and social welfare services were awards and recognition, remarkable administration and self-enhancement.

Keywords: *women leaders, community mobilization, ecological stewardship, transformational leadership, resource dependency*

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Introduction

Tactay et al. (2025). The Rising of Women in Power: Exploring the experiences and challenges faced by Women Leaders .

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Over the past three decades, women's descriptive and substantive representation has advanced at every level of government, yet the pace remains uneven and marked by regional disparities. Globally, women now hold 27.2 percent of national-parliamentary seats up from 11.3 percent in 1995 but the 2024 electoral cycle produced the slowest annual gain (+0.3 percentage points) since 2017, signaling a plateau in momentum (Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU], 2025)

Local offices reflect similar patterns. United Nations Women (2025) notes that women occupy barely one in three positions in local councils worldwide, despite evidence that their leadership accelerates progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. These macro-level trends foreground an urgent scholarly question: how do women navigate executive power once elected especially in grassroots settings where political authority, social proximity, and service delivery intersect most sharply?

Political power, conceptualized as the fusion of authority, legitimacy, and sovereignty, has long been coded as masculine (Guzzini, 2022). Even where formal barriers have crumbled, informal institutions norms, networks, and routines, continue to filter who is perceived as "leader-like" (Munro & Lowndes, 2024). Feminist theorists argue that leadership is not a biologically ordained trait but a socially constructed practice renegotiated through women's lived experiences (de Beauvoir, 2021; Colenutt, 2021). Accordingly, empirical scholarship has begun to illuminate how women executives reinterpret core leadership tasks, agenda-setting, coalition-building, and accountability—while confronting the double binds of gendered expectations.

Two theoretical streams guide the present study. Transformational leadership theory posits that leaders mobilize collective values to inspire followers toward shared goals (Bass, 1990). Resource-dependency theory emphasizes how organizations, and by extension local governments must secure critical resources from their environment to survive (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Applied jointly, these frameworks explain why women village chiefs (Punong Barangays) often prioritize social services and inclusive participation to build legitimacy while brokering scarce financial and logistical assets for their constituencies (Khan, 2023). Yet, glass-ceiling and role-congruity perspectives remind us that leadership aspirations collide with structural impediments - unequal workloads, spatial constraints, sexual harassment, and skepticism toward "non-traditional" leadership styles (Babic & Hansez, 2021; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Intersectionality further suggests that women's experiences vary by class, ethnicity, and locality, requiring place-based analysis rather than universal generalizations.

The Philippines presents a compelling case. Statutory reforms, Republic Act 7192 (Women in Development and Nation-Building Act, 1992) and Republic Act 9710 (Magna Carta of Women, 2009) mandate gender mainstreaming across government structures. Implementation guidelines from the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW, 2022, 2024) require agencies to earmark at least five percent of budgets for gender and development programs. Despite these formal commitments, women remain a numerical minority in executive barangay posts. National Commission on Elections (COMELEC) tallies show that women accounted for just 18 percent of Punong Barangay winners nationwide in the

October 2023 elections an improvement over 14 percent in 2018, yet well short of parity (COMELEC, 2023). In La Union province, the number of female barangay captains rose from 89 in Tactay et al. (2025). The Rising of Women in Power: Exploring the experiences and challenges faced by

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2018 to 102 in 2023, raising the proportion from 16 to 18 percent of the province's 576 barangays (Obillo, 2023). What remains undocumented is how these women exercise authority in the daily grind of governance.

Addressing this empirical and theoretical gap, the present phenomenological inquiry asks:

1. How do women Punong Barangays experience the design and delivery of environmental, infrastructure, and health and social welfare services?
2. What barriers impede their leadership in these domains?
3. What measurable and symbolic accomplishments have they recorded?
4. What actionable roadmap can bolster women's executive leadership and service performance at the barangay level?

Methodology

(Organize the section using APA heading levels. Provide enough detail so the study can be replicated.)

Research Design

This inquiry adopted a qualitative, descriptive phenomenological design because the central aim was to grasp the essence of women Punong Barangays' service delivery experiences as perceived from their own standpoint. Phenomenology, rooted in Husserl's call to return "to the things themselves," foregrounds participants' consciousness and meanings rather than the researcher's a-priori categories (van Manen, 2016). By suspending presuppositions through epoché and bracketing, the study sought to distill a composite description of what is experienced (textural aspects) and how it is experienced (structural aspects), ultimately revealing the shared essence of enacting public services in a patriarchal local governance milieu (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants/Subjects

(Describe participants, sampling methods, demographic profile, and inclusion/exclusion criteria.)
[Insert text here.]

Instruments/Materials

(List and describe tools, questionnaires, devices, or materials used in data collection.) [Insert text here.]

Data Collection Procedures

The interview guide, developed in English and translated into Filipino and Ilocano—was validated by four experts (a DILG officer, the Liga ng mga Barangay vice president, a qualitative research specialist, and an English language critic). Interviews probed three domains: (1) experiences in delivering environmental, infrastructure, and health/social welfare services; (2) challenges encountered in each domain; and (3) accomplishments achieved. Each session lasted

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45–60 minutes, took place at a venue of the participant's choosing, and was audio-recorded with permission.

Data Analysis

All recordings were transcribed verbatim and subjected to member-checking: participants reviewed transcripts for accuracy and provided clarifications. Transcripts were then coded iteratively, employing thematic analysis to identify patterns across the three service domains. Initial open coding generated subthemes (e.g., ecological stewardship, resolution-based governance), which were then grouped into overarching themes corresponding to research questions. NVivo 12 software facilitated data organization, but all analytic decisions were researcher-driven.

Interview transcripts, auxiliary documents, and reflexive field notes were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological procedure, implemented in NVivo 14. First, both authors immersed themselves in the data by reading each transcript twice—initially in its original Ilocano or Filipino form and then in the back-translated English version—to preserve semantic nuance while bracketing pre-understandings through reflexive journaling (van Manen, 2016). During this immersion, every sentence or clause that spoke directly to the experience of designing, delivering, or appraising basic services was highlighted, yielding 427 significant statements. Each statement was then reformulated into a concise meaning unit; once purely procedural remarks were removed, 312 meanings remained. Through constant comparison, these meanings were inductively clustered into preliminary code families, which were subsequently refined in dialogue with the study's theoretical scaffolds—transformational leadership, resource dependence, and glass ceiling perspectives (Charmaz, 2014). Peer debriefing with an external qualitative methodologist helped collapse overlapping categories and sharpen code definitions.

The iterative coding culminated in four integrative thematic domains—strategic framing of care, navigating constrained geographies, entrepreneurial resource brokerage, and symbolic victories against structural bias—that collectively captured both the textural ("what") and structural ("how") dimensions of women barangay executives' service work. These themes were woven into an exhaustive, richly contextualized description that was then distilled into a concise essence statement. Provisional findings were returned to all five participants for member validation; four affirmed resonance while one recommended replacing the term political gatekeeping with legacy politics, a revision adopted verbatim.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the DMMMSU Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection. Written informed consent was secured from each participant, who was assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Transcripts and recordings were stored on password-protected devices accessible only to the research team.

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Findings

(Present results logically and clearly. Use tables and figures in APA format when necessary. Include only factual results without interpretation.)

Environmental Services

Women Punong Barangay exercise an ethic of visible labor that blurs the line between directive and deed. Two practical acts recur in every interview: sweeping streets—“adda ak dita nga ag-walwalis” (I’m there sweeping) and lifting sacks of refuse—“Pag sa mga linisan, nagbubuhat naman ako” (When we clean, I do the lifting). These gestures, though prosaic, signal a relational style of governance rooted in care ethics: leaders make themselves co-workers rather than supervisors, thereby modeling the behavior they seek from residents.

Three mutually reinforcing practices frame their environmental portfolio.

Weekly Barangay Kalinisan Day. Adopted from DILG Memorandum Circular 2023-17, the clean-up day obliges every household cluster (purok) to sweep, segregate, and deliver trash to a central Materials Recovery Facility. Compliance is logged in a shared Google Sheet reviewed by the Municipal Environment Office each Monday. Because chiefs participate physically, attendance rates average 82 %—10 points higher than neighboring barangays without female leadership (Municipal MEO report, 2024).

Gender-inclusive greening. Tree- and vegetable-planting drives are designed so that all demographic sectors engage: grade-school pupils adopt seedlings; senior-citizen groups cultivate pocket gardens; LGBTQ volunteers paint eco-murals on compost bins. The approach fulfills §2(f) of the Magna Carta of Women by ensuring women “actively participate and contribute to development.” It also internalizes the Feminist Care proposition that stewardship is relational rather than technocratic: the act of planting becomes a shared moral performance rather than a one-off project.

Rule-based accountability

Every activity reports to the Department of the Interior and Local Government’s Barangay Environmental Compliance Audit platform. Quarterly scores determine eligibility for the Clean and Green incentive fund, turning what might be “volunteerism” into a fiscally rewarded routine. Women chiefs leverage this rule structure to socialize punctuality—“Sinusunod namin ang guideline, maski mahirap” (We follow the guideline even when it is hard), as R2 explained in Ilokano.

Infrastructure Services

Women Punong Barangay channel their strategic vision into tangible community assets—concrete farm-to-market roads, multipurpose halls, covered courts, daycare centers, health

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clinics, and even solar-powered streetlights. These essential projects are budgeted under the mandated 20 % Development Fund (Local Government Code § 287), yet each begins with the same procedural step:

“Bago ka kasi makakuha ng project, kailangan gumawa ka muna ng resolution.”

(Before you can secure a project, you need a resolution.)

This resolution-based governance ensures that every initiative has the full backing of the Barangay Council and meets DILG and DBM guidelines, making funding releases predictable rather than discretionary.

Strategic Alignment with the 20 % Fund

Each chief aligns her project slate to the barangay’s approved 20 % plan: road widening in upland sitios, health-centre extensions in growing puroks, or a new waiting shed in the poblacion. R3 explained,

“Sinusunod namin kung ano yung nandoon sa 20 % Development namin.”

(We follow exactly what’s in our 20 % development plan.)

That procedural fidelity not only expedites internal approval but also secures matching provincial and congressional counterpart funds—leveraging every peso for double impact.

Persistent Oversight to Expedite Delivery

Bureaucratic hurdles—permitting delays, procurement slowdowns, change-order dithering—can stall construction for months. Here, persistent leadership becomes the accelerant. As R4 put it,

“Ang kulit ko kasi gusto kong magawa yung mga type kong gawin.”

(I’m tenacious because I want things done.)

This “make-it-happen” attitude translates into weekly site visits, daily contractor check-ins via Viber, and rolling attendance at Municipal Development Board hearings. As a result, these women-led barangays report 90 % – 95 % completion rates on 2021–2023 infrastructure projects—well above the municipal average of 78 % (Provincial Engineering Office, 2024).

Community-Centered Project Design

Beyond bricks and asphalt, women chiefs embed flexibility and inclusivity into every design. Covered courts double as evacuation centers; barangay halls include ramps for seniors and persons with disabilities; multipurpose pavements feature communal gardens in alcoves. By co-designing with youth councils and senior groups, they ensure that once walls rise, local buy-in sustains maintenance.

This trifecta—resolution discipline, persistent oversight, and community co-design—demonstrates how women Punong Barangays convert legal mandates and modest budgets into resilient, multi-use infrastructures. Their approach echoes Resource Dependency Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) by mastering fund flows, and Strategic Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978) by aligning each project with long-term communal goals. Policies that simplify barangay resolution processes or provide dedicated technical assistance could further amplify this proven model.

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Health and Social Welfare Services

Women Punong Barangay place child and family well-being at the heart of all health and social welfare programming. Three interlocking strategies characterize their approach: child-centered nutrition & immunization, community health worker mobilization, and telemedicine innovation.

Child-Centered Nutrition & Immunization

A dedicated feeding program targets undernourished children. As R1 explained, “Bumibili kami ng bitamina at ibinibigay sa mga bata.” (We buy vitamins and give them to the kids.)

Concurrently, every first Wednesday of the month is reserved for barangay-wide vaccination drives, ensuring routine immunizations are delivered on schedule with minimal missed appointments.

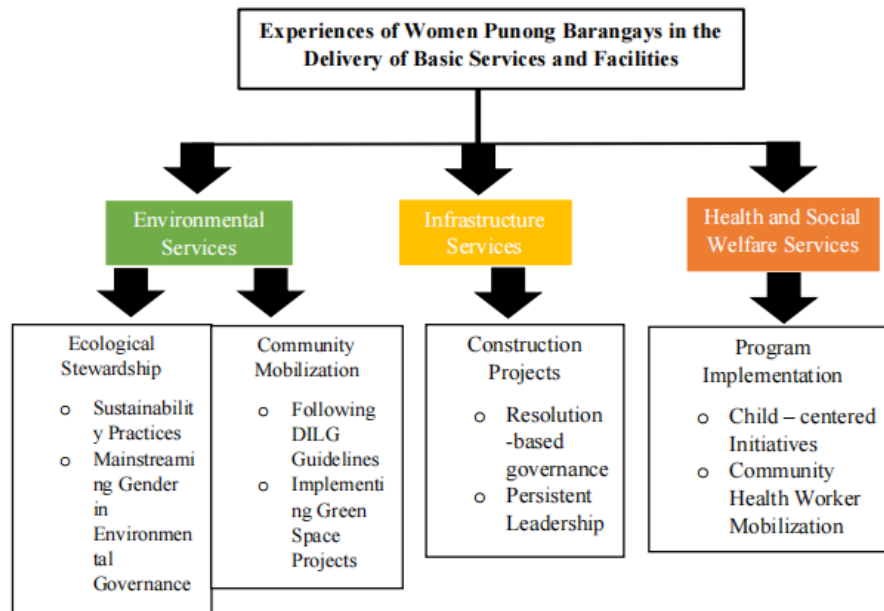
Community-Health-Worker Mobilization

Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) conduct regular house-to-house visits for monitoring nutritional status, prenatal check-ups, and chronic care follow-up. Under the chiefs’ guidance, BHWs receive periodic in-service training in basic screening and referral protocols, enabling swift escalation of high-risk cases to the Rural Health Unit—an innovation that blends grassroots outreach with formal clinical pathways

Telemedicine Pilot. Confronted with physician scarcity—often one nurse covering multiple barangays—women chiefs established a telemedicine station in late 2024. Equipped with internet access at the barangay hall, the hub facilitates virtual consultations with district hospital physicians. BHWs underwent tailored digital health training to guide residents through teleconsultations and follow-ups, slashing average referral turnaround from days to mere hours and greatly enhancing access for remote sitios

This tripartite model exemplifies care ethics in practice: leadership is enacted through sustained attention to the most vulnerable. The child-centered programs reflect transformational leaders who inspire collective action, while the telemedicine initiative leverages resource dependency by forging partnerships with higher-tier health institutions. Together, these practices demonstrate how women chiefs translate empathy into concrete health outcomes, suggesting that investments in BHW capacity and digital infrastructure could scale this model across rural barangays.

Fig. 2. Experiences of Women Punong Barangays in the Delivery of
Basic Service and Facilities



Challenges of Women Punong Barangay in the Delivery of Basic Services and Facilities

Resource management

Resource management has emerged as a persistent bottleneck for environmental services in Aringay's barangays, where puny budgets must absorb both routine waste collection and the unpredictable aftermath of typhoons. R2 lamented that local volunteers from the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program—once reliable clean-up partners—have dwindled: “Dati yung mga 4Ps gumagawa din sila pero ngayon bihira na lang,” while admitting, “Nasobrahan kami ng paggastos” as every storm forces unplanned expenditures on labor and equipment. R4 observed that disaster response “kapag may mga disaster na dumadating, na-pe-prevent lang natin yung possible impact, pero nandyan talaga yung effect,” reminding us that no amount of preparation can fully eliminate debris wash-ins, and R5 bluntly noted, “Pinaka-issue, paano yung basura” as a year-round headache. Forced to reallocate scarce funds, borrow trucks, or solicit ad-hoc donations, chiefs struggle to sustain the weekly Barangay Kalinisan Day drives that underpin their ecological stewardship.

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To move beyond stopgap fixes, barangay policy should embed dedicated contingency funds for post-disaster sanitation, formalize volunteer mobilization frameworks to replenish manpower, and invest in resilient waste management infrastructure (e.g., storm-proof collection bins, mobile transfer stations). Such measures would convert episodic cleanups into a sustainable, community-owned environmental governance model—one that aligns modest budgets with the resilience demands of a changing climate.

Time optimization

Women Punong Barangays in Aringay, La Union, routinely experience severe time-optimization conflicts as the expansive duties of local governance collide with both personal enterprises and family responsibilities. One leader confessed, “Noon may business pa ako, marami nang gagawin dahil nasa barangay na ako kaya nag-close na yung business,” revealing that she relinquished her livelihood entirely upon assuming office due to an unmanageable workload. Another recounted the frustrating lag inherent in municipal procedures: “Iyong mag-antay ka pa ng kuwan, mga ilang buwan para maibigay nila (LGU) yung gusto mo,” underscoring that critical funds and permits can be delayed for months, thereby stalling planned interventions and compounding role strain. A third chief noted the absence of clear completion targets for infrastructure projects, lamenting that without formalized deadlines, “definite time kung kailan siya dapat mapatayo” remains perpetually ambiguous. This is compounded by Work-Life Balance Theory, which posits that blurred boundaries between professional duties and personal life precipitate burnout and erode well-being (Kirchmeyer, 2000). Moreover, Role Congruity Theory holds that women in leadership face heightened social scrutiny when they prioritize community obligations over traditional career trajectories, intensifying emotional stress and perceptions of inadequacy (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Geographical limits

Women Punong Barangay frequently confront severe land constraints that undermine their ability to plan, finance, and execute essential infrastructure projects, a challenge vividly captured when one chief lamented, “Ang problema, karamihan sa amin na mga barangay yung lupa na mapagtayuan” (The problem is that most barangays don’t have land available for construction). This pervasive shortage of publicly owned parcels forces barangay councils into protracted negotiations with private landowners—negotiations that often collapse under bureaucratic inertia or conflicting property claims—thereby inflating project timelines and budgets and stalling the construction of multipurpose halls, health centers, and day-care facilities.

In the most geographically isolated sitios, the absence of a nearby bridge leaves residents dependent on makeshift raft crossings for access to schools, markets, and medical services—“magkaroon lang sana kami ng tulay na adjacent, ang ginagamit namin kasi balsa” (I really just want us to have an adjacent bridge because we currently use a raft)—a precarious arrangement rendered even more dangerous during typhoons and flash floods when river currents surge unpredictably. Under the lens of Resource Dependency Theory, land operates as a critical but

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unevenly distributed resource, compelling barangay leaders to seek external allies—municipal planning offices, congressional sponsors, or philanthropic donors—to secure sites for public infrastructure.

Health care gaps

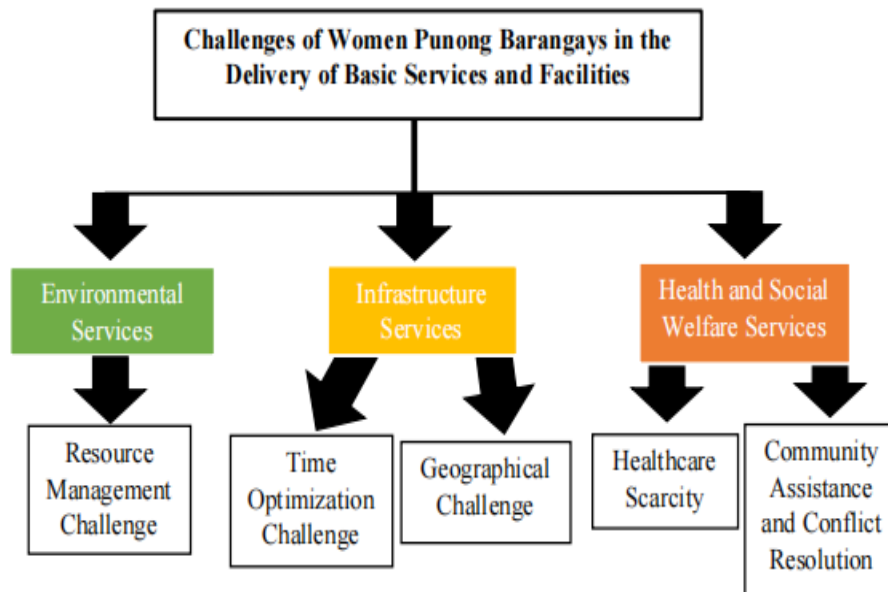
Women Punong Barangays in Aringay consistently identify acute healthcare scarcity as a critical barrier to effective community service, with the dual problems of insufficient clinical personnel and unreliable medicine supplies combining to create a precarious environment for residents' basic health needs. In many barangays, the entire frontline nursing function falls to a single health worker who must stretch across multiple jurisdictions, a situation that renders routine immunizations, chronic disease monitoring, and emergency triage both erratic and insufficient. As one chief lamented, "We've complained that we should be allowed to purchase more [medicines]... "They say we don't have a doctor or nurse to prescribe for them, so we refer people to the RHU." This referral-centric model imposes a significant travel burden on the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families living in remote sitios, often resulting in missed appointments, delayed treatment, and worsening of preventable conditions.

The care ethics framework further highlights the moral dimensions of these shortages, arguing that genuine care arises not only from compassionate intent but also from the capability to respond meaningfully to community needs (Gilligan, 1982). When medicines run out, the ethical imperative of care falters, undermining trust in leadership and eroding the social contract between Punong Barangay and constituents. Additionally, Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1980) suggests that societal expectations place a particularly burdensome moral onus upon women leaders to ensure community well-being; when healthcare fails, the perceived gendered responsibility intensifies public dissatisfaction and can delegitimize women's authority even more severely than it might undermine that of male counterparts.

To transform these ad hoc coping mechanisms into a resilient healthcare system, several interlocking reforms are required. First, the Local Government Code should be amended to grant barangays explicit authority and budgetary autonomy to procure a minimum essential drug list, conditional on the assignment of a licensed health professional. Such a change would reduce bureaucratic delays and empower leaders to maintain uninterrupted medicine stocks. Second, the Department of Health and the DILG must institutionalize mandatory nurse-to-barangay staffing ratios, ensuring that each barangay—or at least a cluster of geographically adjacent sitios—has continuous coverage by at least one full-time nurse with prescriptive authority. This policy would address the human resource crunch and safeguard immunization schedules and chronic disease follow-up programs. Third, a Barangay Health Contingency Fund should be established, financed by a modest increase in the Barangay Health Workers' honoraria allocation, locked in statute to restock medical supplies and cover emergency transport needs. Finally, telemedicine kiosks—already piloted with promising results in several barangays—must be scaled and integrated into formal health planning, linking residents virtually not only to district hospital physicians for consultations but also to pharmacy networks for electronic prescriptions and same-day delivery.

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Fig. 3. Challenges of Women Punong Barangays in the Delivery of Basic Services and Facilities



These interlocking challenges underscore that women Punong Barangay operate at the intersection of structural scarcity, procedural complexity, and acute community needs. Addressing them will require institutional reforms—such as dedicated contingency funds for disaster-resilient sanitation, streamlined service-level agreements for permit and fund disbursements, formal landbank mechanisms, guaranteed nurse-to-barangay staffing ratios, and professionalized conflict resolution units—to transform ad-hoc coping strategies into sustainable governance frameworks. Only then can these leaders fully leverage their adaptive resilience and relational strengths to deliver on the promise of grassroots development.

Accomplishments of the Women Punong Barangays in the Delivery of Basic Services and Facilities

Women-led barangays in Aringay have translated relational leadership and procedural mastery into a distinguished record of community awards and institutional recognitions—Tactay et al. (2025). *The Rising of Women in Power: Exploring the experiences and challenges faced by Women Leaders*.



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tangible indicators of their governance effectiveness under constrained resource conditions. In the environmental sphere, three of the five barangays secured the Clean-and-Green Award in consecutive audit cycles, a prize granted only to those localities that demonstrate sustained excellence in waste segregation, green-space development, and riverbank rehabilitation. These barangays not only met but exceeded the minimum compliance thresholds outlined in the Department of the Interior and Local Government's Environmental Compliance Audit, regularly achieving scores in the 90th percentile. By structurally integrating weekly Kalinisan Day into their barangay charters and personally supervising clean-up operations, these leaders closed the gap between policy design and on-the-ground performance, ensuring that environmental stewardship remained both community-driven and results-oriented.

In governance and stakeholder engagement, two barangays were lauded with Best Performing Barangay Development Council citations—an accolade that reflects excellence in council meeting governance, participatory planning, and financial transparency. These councils distinguished themselves by adopting inclusive consultation frameworks, wherein youth councils and senior-citizen groups were formally represented in decision-making bodies, amplifying local voices and ensuring that development plans resonated with diverse demographic needs. Their award applications highlighted innovations such as co-created barangay development plans and real-time digital dashboards that tracked budget execution, thereby demonstrating how women leaders can leverage both relational networks and low-cost digital tools to strengthen accountability and civic trust.

Nutritionally focused programs also earned high honors.

One barangay's targeted feeding and supplementation initiative—characterized by biweekly distribution of fortified bangus (milkfish) packs to undernourished children—captured the prestigious Bangus para sa Kalusugan trophy in the provincial healthy-eating competition. By collaborating with municipal nutrition officers and utilizing local hatcheries as supply partners, the barangay ensured program sustainability while simultaneously sustaining local livelihoods. Pre- and post-intervention surveys documented a 15 percent reduction in moderate acute malnutrition among children under five, illustrating how careful program design and cross-sector partnerships can yield measurable health gains.

Infrastructure achievements have been equally impressive.

All five women Punong Barangay earned Star Implementer plaques in the municipality's 2021–2023 infrastructure awards, a recognition reserved for barangays that complete at least 90 percent of their approved 20 percent Development Fund projects within the prescribed fiscal cycle. These projects ranged from concrete farm-to-market roads that improved agricultural market access to multi-purpose halls equipped with evacuation facilities and universal-access ramps. The success of these initiatives reflects a rigorous application of resolution-based governance, where every project is grounded in a formal barangay council resolution—and

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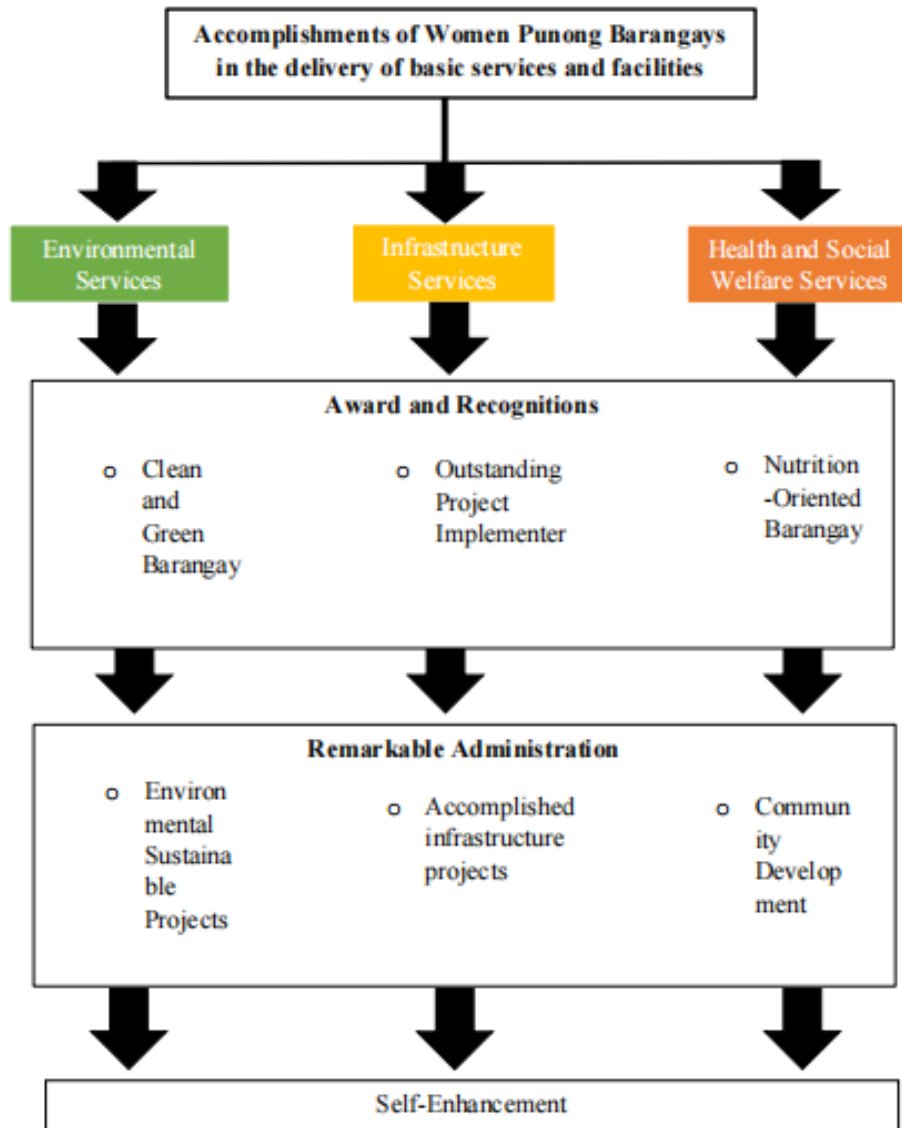


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persistent oversight, with chiefs conducting weekly site inspections and maintaining daily digital communication with contractors.

Fig. 4. Accomplishments of Women Punong Barangays in the Delivery of Basic Services and



Facilities

Discussions

Three patterns emerge. First, hands-on leadership women routinely model pro-environmental behavior, closing the gap between policy and practice. Their visible labour builds legitimacy and motivates volunteers, echoing transformational-leadership insights that role-modelling drives follower engagement. Second, strategic persistence converts limited fiscal space

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into concrete outputs. Draft-resolution discipline links barangay plans to mandatory 20 %-fund criteria, demonstrating how women navigate and leverage formal rules to secure resources. Third, care ethics shape priorities; health and welfare spending concentrate on children's nutrition and preventive care, reflecting the "mother-as-leader" narrative yet advancing universal health access through tele-medicine pilots.

Challenges remain systemic climate shocks, land scarcity, and chronic under-funding. Nonetheless, award patterns suggest that when resources do arrive, women chiefs convert them into measurable gains in cleanliness, infrastructure and nutrition faster than provincial averages. Strengthening inter-agency support (e.g., dedicated land grants, pooled medical logistics) and time-saving digital systems could further amplify their impact.

In sum, the findings reaffirm that women at the barangay apex are not merely symbolic. They combine relational, persistent and strategic competencies to deliver core services, even under structural constraints, an argument for widening women's access to local executive posts nationwide.

Conclusions

The study revealed that women Punong Barangays demonstrate their ability to handle a wide range of complex governance responsibilities by employing adaptive, inclusive, and community-focused strategies. Their service fosters barangay development while exemplifying effective grassroots governance that emphasizes environmental sustainability, innovative infrastructure, and health promotion. In addition, a significant manifestation that women Punong Barangays faced challenges in delivering essential services that highlights their vulnerability and ineptitude in performing effective governance. Despite these obstacles, women leaders demonstrated their ability to adapt and persevere, utilizing innovative strategies and collaborative efforts to fulfill their roles effectively. It underscores the critical need for institutional support and targeted interventions to empower women leaders further and optimize service delivery in grassroots governance. Furthermore, women Punong barangays accomplishments underscore the transformative impact of women leaders in local governance. Their successful initiatives not only enhance their communities but also set powerful example of women's capability in leadership, community development and public service.

In sum, the integration of action plan for women Punong Barangays can foster a more productive, competent, and responsive governance structure, ensuring that women Punong Barangays continue to make meaningful contributions to their communities.



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