

NETWORKING AS A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF NGOs
IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOILO

A Thesis

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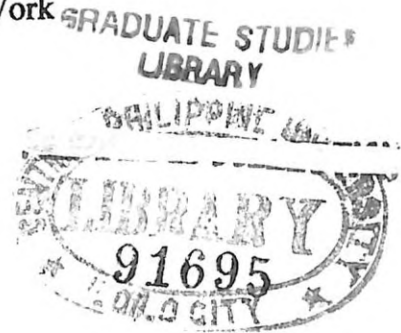
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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the dynamics of the Iloilo Council of Social Development, Inc. (ICSD) as a network of NGOs in their collaborative effort towards social development. Specifically, the study addresses the following issues: factors and processes that brought about the development and sustenance of ICSD as a network and the conditions under which its networking was organized; structure, function, activities of the network vis-à-vis its member NGOs; dynamics of the relationship between ICSD as a network and its member NGOs; factors that promote or hinder effective networking.

Two levels of analysis were used in this study. First, it delved into the data from the other end of management, which is the Network. The current head or director, as well as the previous presidents of the network served as key informants. Second, it described the dynamics of relationship between and among NGOs; hence the second level focuses on member NGOs.

Five member NGOs representing various areas of concern were selected as respondents, using the following criteria: classification and length of membership. The latter was used when there were more than one member NGOs with the same classification. The data from these sources, as well as from written documents and retrospective account were validated through focus group discussions where pioneers and key players in the network were invited to share their insights.

It was found out that the Iloilo Council of Social Development, Inc. (ICSD) lacks strong management capacities and a framework for organizational strategies. The lack of

full time personnel and multiple roles and functions of leaders hampered the operation of the network. Its officers are overburdened since the needs and concerns of respective NGOs also pressure them. Constant change in the network's direction due to frequent conduct of strategic planning has created confusion to members. Despite its seventeen years of existence, little documentation has been done concerning the network, which impaired the learning. There is also a weakness in the project design, in the sense that ICSD has been fund-driven. While ICSD has pioneered networking in Iloilo specializing on relationship, it failed to link with other networks.

To facilitate order, there is a need to define the organization structure and the cause of their organization. ICSD needs to have a common framework and ideology that has to be clearly defined and operationalized for implementation. Furthermore, it is important for the organization's ideology to be congruent to the organization's mission, goals, and objectives. ICSD must limit its purposes/thrusts to a more attainable and relevant one, taking into account that there are other networks already existing at present. With such a focus, ICSD will have an impact in the community, and other members of the civil society, as it has experienced in the past. There is a need rather to have a definite plan and foresight to create sustainable projects. Proper documentation and information dissemination are also needed to enhance learning from experience to help improve the image of the network. Officers must prioritize their involvement and participation in such a way that the task will be distributed to other leaders. There is therefore a need for manpower to focus on the network's activities.

Finally, ICSD has to look at other networks as partners not as competitors. By doing so, it establishes its role as a pioneer in networking in Iloilo.