



## Community Needs Assessment (CNA) as a Framework for Designing Extension Programs in the College of Liberal Arts of Northeastern College

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### ABSTRACT

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The Northeastern College–College of Liberal Arts (NC-COLA) is committed to uplifting community well-being through responsive extension programs. This study evaluated the community needs of Barangay Mabini across seven domains: Education and Parenting, Food Safety and Hygiene, Human Rights and Violence Awareness, Livelihood and Financial Literacy, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), Environmental Conservation, and Organizational Planning and Management. Using a descriptive mixed-method design combining survey questionnaires and key informant interviews, results showed that Livelihood and Financial Literacy obtained the highest weighted mean (4.75), identifying economic vulnerability as the community's most pressing concern. Food Safety and Hygiene (4.72), Organizational Planning and Management (4.68), Environmental Conservation (4.63), and DRRM (4.59) also registered high demand, reflecting gaps in public health, governance, and disaster preparedness. Human Rights and Violence Awareness (4.48) indicated greater preference for practical safety programs over formal legal education. It was concluded that Barangay Mabini requires coordinated, multi-stakeholder interventions targeting economic empowerment, institutional governance, and community resilience. Recommendations include financial literacy and livelihood programs, strengthening of the Barangay DRRM Council, systematic waste management, and capacity-building for local officials in partnership with relevant government agencies.

### KEYWORDS:

community needs assessment, livelihood, disaster risk reduction, barangay governance, public health, extension services

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities are mandated not only to provide instruction and conduct research but also to extend their services to the community through extension programs. These programs serve as vital instruments for higher education institutions (HEIs) to contribute to sustainable development, community empowerment, and social transformation. However, for extension programs to be truly responsive and effective, they must be anchored in a thorough understanding of the community's actual needs. In this context, the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) becomes an essential framework for program planning and implementation.

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The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) recognizes extension as one of the tri-fold functions of higher education institutions (CHED Memorandum Order No. 52, s. 2016). It emphasizes that extension programs should be needs-based, sustainable, and relevant to national development goals, particularly those aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). Despite these policy frameworks, many HEIs still face challenges in systematically identifying and prioritizing community needs, often resulting in programs that have limited long-term impact.

Community Needs Assessment refers to the systematic collection and analysis of data to determine the needs, resources, and priorities of a community (Anderson & McFarlane, 2019). It provides HEIs with insights that help align their extension projects with the realities of the communities they serve. According to Adorio and Bacani (2021), needs-based extension initiatives are more likely to gain community participation and yield long-term impact compared to those designed without empirical grounding. Furthermore, CNA fosters collaboration and shared

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ownership between the institution and its partner communities, ensuring that projects address the root causes of local challenges (Harris et al., 2019).

Several studies have underscored the importance of CNA in extension planning. According to Alibegović et al. (2020), conducting a needs assessment allows educational institutions to develop extension projects that directly respond to community concerns such as education, livelihood, environment, and health. Moreover, Harris et al. (2019) emphasized that participatory assessments foster ownership and collaboration between academic institutions and their partner communities.

Despite this policy direction, many institutions continue to implement extension programs based on availability of resources or convenience rather than empirical assessment (Magno & Cañete, 2020). This often leads to projects that are short-lived or misaligned with the actual priorities of the community. As Bautista and Mendoza (2021) noted, the absence of a systematic needs assessment process in extension planning limits the sustainability and relevance of higher education outreach initiatives.

In this light, the College of Liberal Arts of Northeastern College seeks to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of its extension initiatives by employing a systematic community needs assessment. CNA serves as a decision-making tool that bridges academic expertise and community realities, ensuring that extension programs are evidence-based and contextually appropriate.

This study investigated the needs of Barangay Mabini, Santiago City. Specifically, the study sought to determine the respondents' age, educational attainment, employment status, shelter, and toilet availability. Moreover, it assesses the needs of the community in terms of education and parenting, food safety and hygiene, human rights and violence, livelihood and financial literacy, disaster risk reduction management, environmental conservation, and organizational planning.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the use of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) as a framework for designing extension programs in the College of Liberal Arts of Northeastern College. Specifically, this research identified community needs in the areas of Education and Parenting; Food Safety and Hygiene; Human Rights and Violence Awareness; Livelihood and Financial Literacy; Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM); Environmental Conservation; and, Organizational Planning and Management.

### II. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the community needs and the applicability of the CNA framework. The quantitative phase involves a survey to gather demographic

data and community needs indicators, while the qualitative phase involves focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) to gain deeper insights into perceptions and experiences related to community engagement and program design.

The study was conducted in Barangay Mabini, Santiago City, Isabela, Philippines which is a partner community of Northeastern College's extension programs under the College of Liberal Arts. This area is chosen due to their proximity, accessibility, and prior engagement with the institution.

A total of one hundred (100) respondents were randomly selected who underwent the survey.

For the qualitative part, participants were purposively chosen from among the randomly selected individuals for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to provide contextual understanding of the data. A total of ten (10) participants were subjected to KII and FGD. This includes Barangay officials and leaders as community stakeholders.

The researcher used a single set of questionnaires adapted to the study of Uy and Arendain (2023) with additional indicators to fit the locale of the study. Quantitative data were analyzed using

weighted mean based on 5-point Likert scales, while qualitative responses substantiate the quantitative data.

### III. RESULTS

This part presents the results and interpretation of the data gathered as base on the objectives of the study.

**Table 1: Community Needs in relation to Education and Parenting**

| Indicators                                             | WM          | DI                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Training for parental involvement in child's learning. | 4.88        | HN                   |
| Seminar on responsible parenting.                      | 4.77        | HN                   |
| Mastery of writing                                     | 4.57        | HN                   |
| Mastery of reading                                     | 4.67        | HN                   |
| Mastery of the four basic operations in Mathematics.   | 4.53        | HN                   |
| Access to basic school supplies.                       | 4.42        | HN                   |
| Stress management program for parents and children.    | 4.52        | HN                   |
| Community physical fitness activity.                   | 4.19        | N                    |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                           | <b>4.57</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 1 shows that the community needs in relation to education and parenting were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.56. This clearly indicates that education- and parenting-related interventions are perceived by the community as critical and urgent.

Among the indicators, training for parental involvement in a child's learning (WM = 4.88) and seminars on responsible

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parenting (WM = 4.77) obtained the highest ratings, both classified as Highly Needed. This implies that parents recognize their vital role in their children's academic success but feel a strong need for guidance, skills development, and structured support to effectively fulfill this role.

Similarly, the high ratings for mastery of reading (WM = 4.67), writing (WM = 4.57), and basic mathematical operations (WM = 4.53) underscore persistent learning gaps among children, suggesting the necessity of academic reinforcement programs, literacy interventions, and numeracy-focused activities.

The need for stress management programs for parents and children (WM = 4.52) further highlights the psychosocial challenges faced by families, which may affect both parenting practices and learners' academic performance. Meanwhile, access to basic school supplies (WM = 4.42) being rated as highly needed reflects underlying socioeconomic constraints that may hinder students' participation and success in school.

Although community physical fitness activity (WM = 4.19) was interpreted as needed rather than highly needed, it still signifies the importance of holistic development and well-being, complementing academic and parenting interventions.

According to Bartolome et al. (2017), Filipino parents want to be involved in their children's learning journey, yet responsibilities engrained in their culture necessitate the needs of the family before the educational needs of the child. This substantiates the statement of one respondent during the interview.

*"Kung sakali mang magcoconduct ng mga programa para sa edukasyon at responsible parenthood, mas gugustuhin po namin na ilaan na lang ito sa aming mga anak tulad ng programa sa pagbabasa at pagsusulat."* – Participant 3

(If ever programs on education and responsible parenthood are conducted, we would prefer that these be focused instead on our children, such as programs on reading and writing.

Respondents are concerned about the education of their children. The current findings are consistent with Luna (2023), which revealed that many families are concerned about the education of their children; they need basic literacy programs. During the focus group discussion, one respondent emphasized prioritizing their children in literacy programs

*"Kung sakali mang magcoconduct ng mga programa para sa edukasyon at responsible parenthood, mas gugustuhin po namin na ilaan na lang ito sa aming mga anak tulad ng programa sa pagbabasa at pagsusulat."* – Participant 3

(If ever programs on education and responsible parenthood are conducted, we would prefer that these be focused instead on our children, such as programs on reading and writing.

**Table 2: Community Needs in relation to Food Safety and Hygiene**

| Indicators                                                   | WM          | DI                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Community clean-up drive.                                    | 4.82        | HN                   |
| Access to personal hygienic needs.                           | 4.72        | HN                   |
| Awareness about food hazards.                                | 4.76        | HN                   |
| Food safety practice for every household.                    | 4.70        | HN                   |
| Solid waste management: Reuse, Reduce, Recycle               | 4.80        | HN                   |
| Access to potable water.                                     | 4.74        | HN                   |
| Personal hygiene practice for every member of the community. | 4.70        | HN                   |
| Workshop on alternative way to preserve food.                | 4.54        | HN                   |
| Food contamination awareness and avoidance.                  | 4.66        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                                 | <b>4.72</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 2 reveals that the community needs in relation to food safety and hygiene were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.72. This means that there is a strong and consistent demand for interventions related to sanitation, hygiene, safe food practices, and environmental health within the community.

All indicators were rated as Highly Needed, reflecting widespread concern across multiple dimensions of food safety and hygiene. The highest-rated indicators include community clean-up drives (WM = 4.82) and solid waste management practices—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (WM = 4.80).

High ratings for awareness about food hazards (WM = 4.76), food safety practices for every household (WM = 4.70), and food contamination awareness and avoidance (WM = 4.66) indicate a strong need for education on safe food handling, preparation, storage, and consumption.

The indicators access to potable water (WM = 4.74) and access to personal hygienic needs (WM = 4.72) further emphasize basic infrastructure and resource limitations that directly affect hygiene and food safety. Meanwhile, the need for personal hygiene practices for every community member (WM = 4.70) highlights the importance of behavior change and consistent health-promoting practices at the household and community levels.

Sidiq (2023) had an important note that to practice food safety within indigenous communities; there should be continuous access to traditional food resources. Indigenous communities experience dilemmas in food insecurity as a result of forced relocation to rural reservation lands and the degradation of traditional subsistence patterns (Jernigan et.al, 2021).

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Current findings reveal that residents of the community highly need programs on community clean-up drives and solid waste management. It is stated by one of the respondents that it is important to practice personal hygiene.

*“Napapansin namin na limited ang clean-up drives at kung meron man ay kokonti lang ang sumasali. Pati magsegregate ng kanya-kanyang basura, hindi rin nagagawa ng tam ana nagiging sanhi ng iba’t-ibang sakit.” – Participant 2*

(We have observed that clean-up drives are limited, and even when there are some, only a few people participate. Even the proper segregation of their own waste is not being practiced, which causes various diseases.)

**Table 3: Community Needs in relation to Human Rights and Violence Awareness**

| Indicators                                              | WM          | DI                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Awareness of violence against women, men, and children. | 4.88        | HN                   |
| Seminars on human rights law and its violation.         | 3.39        | MN                   |
| Orientation and workshop on basic life support.         | 4.57        | HN                   |
| Basic self-defense training.                            | 4.46        | HN                   |
| Knowledge about Constitutional Rights.                  | 4.56        | HN                   |
| Seminars about crime prevention and control.            | 4.73        | HN                   |
| Drug Symposium                                          | 4.78        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                            | <b>4.48</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 3 presents that the community needs in relation to human rights and violence awareness were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.48. This indicates that the respondents strongly recognize the importance of programs and initiatives that promote awareness of human rights, safety, and violence prevention within the community. Most indicators were rated as Highly Needed, reflecting the community’s strong concern regarding human rights awareness, violence prevention, and personal safety. The highest-rated indicators include awareness of violence against women, men, and children (WM = 4.88), drug symposium (WM = 4.78), and seminars about crime prevention and control (WM = 4.73).

High ratings for orientation and workshops on basic life support (WM = 4.57), knowledge about constitutional rights (WM = 4.56), and basic self-defense training (WM = 4.46) indicate a strong need for practical knowledge and skills that can help individuals respond to emergencies, understand their legal rights, and protect themselves from potential harm.

However, seminars on human rights law and its violation (WM = 3.39) were rated as Moderately Needed, suggesting that while the community still recognizes its importance, it is perceived as less urgent compared to programs that focus on immediate safety, crime prevention, and violence awareness. Studies have shown that community-based awareness programs significantly contribute to violence prevention and the protection of vulnerable groups (Heise, 2011; World Health Organization, 2014). Likewise, civic education and emergency preparedness programs have been found to strengthen community resilience and enhance citizens’ awareness of their rights and responsibilities (United Nations, 2012).

*“Sa aming tahanan, hindi maiiwasan ang hindi pagkakaunawaan sa pagitan ng mag-asawa. Ngunit nakalulungkot isipin na kung minsan ay lumalampas ito sa simpleng pagtatalo at nauuwi sa pisikal na karahasan. Naranasan ko ang pisikal na pananakit tuwing nalalasing ang aking asawa. Mabuti na lamang at mayroon kaming lider dito na tumutulong sa pag-aayos ng mga alitan sa loob ng aming komunidad.” – Participant 4*

(In our house, misunderstanding between husband and wife is inevitable. But sad to think that sometimes it goes beyond argument; physical violence is involved. I experienced physical violence every time my husband got drunk. Good thing we have a leader here who resolves conflict within the community.)

Respondents of this study affirm that they highly need programs that could enlighten their minds about any form of violence against all genders.

**Table 4: Community Needs in relation to Livelihood and Financial Literacy**

| Indicators                                                                                          | WM          | DI                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Financial literacy on the livelihood program.                                                       | 4.92        | HN                   |
| Training for the livelihood volunteering project.                                                   | 4.80        | HN                   |
| Knowledge on livelihood activities such as backyard gardening, animal raising, and sari-sari store. | 4.86        | HN                   |
| Awareness on creating a budget.                                                                     | 4.74        | HN                   |
| Balancing the needs, wants, and savings.                                                            | 4.46        | HN                   |
| An idea about an emergency fund.                                                                    | 4.78        | HN                   |
| Measuring numeracy for financial inclusion.                                                         | 4.76        | HN                   |
| Income Management                                                                                   | 4.80        | HN                   |
| Empowerment in management decisions.                                                                | 4.38        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                                                                        | <b>4.75</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

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Table 4 shows that the community needs in relation to livelihood and financial literacy were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.75. All were all rated as Highly Needed, indicating that the community strongly recognizes the importance of livelihood development and financial literacy in improving their economic condition.

The highest-rated indicators include financial literacy on the livelihood program (WM = 4.92), knowledge on livelihood activities such as backyard gardening, animal raising, and sari-sari store (WM = 4.86), and training for the livelihood volunteering project (WM = 4.80).

Likewise, high ratings were also observed in indicators related to awareness on creating a budget (WM = 4.74), measuring numeracy for financial inclusion (WM = 4.76), an idea about an emergency fund (WM = 4.78), and income management (WM = 4.80). Meanwhile, balancing the needs, wants, and savings (WM = 4.46) and empowerment in management decisions (WM = 4.38) also received high ratings, indicating the importance of strengthening decision-making skills and financial independence within households. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, financial literacy plays a crucial role in enabling individuals to make informed financial decisions, manage resources effectively, and improve their overall economic well-being (OECD, 2020). Similarly, livelihood training and skills development programs are widely recognized as key strategies for poverty reduction and community empowerment (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2018).

Research shows that financial education significantly improves budgeting practices, savings behavior, and financial resilience among households (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014). Empowering individuals, particularly at the community level, to participate in economic decision-making contributes to sustainable development and improved quality of life (United Nations Development Programme, 2019).

During the KII and FGD, participant mentioned that financial literacy programs and knowledge on livelihood activities such as backyard gardening, animal raising, and sari-sari store are needed.

*“Isa sa kailangan namin ay livelihood programs tulad ng gardening, animal raising at sari-sari store. Kasama nito yung financial literacy para matutunan namin na gamitin ang puhunan sat ama at mapalago pa ito. Yun kasi ang kulang talaga.” – Participant 6*

(One of the things we need is livelihood programs such as gardening, animal raising, and operating a sari-sari store. Along with this is financial literacy so that we can learn how to use our capital properly and further grow it. That is really what we lack.)

**Table 5: Community Needs in relation to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM)**

| Indicators                                                                                                             | WM          | DI                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Knowledge about disaster preparedness and safety measures.                                                             | 4.58        | HN                   |
| Regular community-based disaster drills and training                                                                   | 4.55        | HN                   |
| Clear evacuation plans and identify safe areas for disasters.                                                          | 4.62        | HN                   |
| Information materials about disaster preparedness, such as posters, brochures, announcements, both printed and online. | 4.49        | HN                   |
| Training of community leaders in disaster risk reduction and emergency response.                                       | 4.57        | HN                   |
| Participation of residents in disaster prevention and mitigation activities.                                           | 4.46        | HN                   |
| Adequate facilities and equipment such as first aid kits, rescue tools, and warning devices for emergency response.    | 4.65        | HN                   |
| Effective coordination with local government units (LGUs) and other agencies during disasters.                         | 4.69        | HN                   |
| Education and training on climate change adaptation and disaster resilience.                                           | 4.54        | HN                   |
| Financial and technical assistance to strengthen disaster preparedness and recovery programs.                          | 4.72        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                                                                                           | <b>4.59</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 5 reveals that the community needs in relation to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.59. All were all rated as Highly Needed which means that the community strongly recognizes the importance of strengthening disaster preparedness, response, and resilience programs. This also suggests that respondents perceive disaster risk reduction initiatives as essential for protecting lives, property, and community resources.

The highest-rated indicators include financial and technical assistance to strengthen disaster preparedness and recovery programs (WM = 4.72), effective coordination with local government units (LGUs) and other agencies during disasters (WM = 4.69), and adequate facilities and equipment such as first aid kits, rescue tools, and warning devices for emergency response (WM = 4.65).

Likewise, high ratings were also observed in clear evacuation plans and identification of safe areas for disasters (WM = 4.62), knowledge about disaster preparedness and safety

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measures (WM = 4.58), training of community leaders in disaster risk reduction and emergency response (WM = 4.57), education and training on climate change adaptation and disaster resilience (WM = 4.54), and regular community-based disaster drills and training (WM = 4.55). Meanwhile, information materials about disaster preparedness (WM = 4.49) and participation of residents in disaster prevention and mitigation activities (WM = 4.46) also received high ratings, highlighting the importance of awareness campaigns and active community involvement in disaster risk reduction initiatives.

According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, effective disaster risk reduction depends on strong collaboration among communities, government agencies, and institutions, as well as the availability of adequate resources and preparedness systems (UNDRR, 2015). Studies emphasize that disaster education and community-based preparedness programs significantly improve community resilience and reduce disaster-related risks (Shaw, Shiwaku, & Takeuchi, 2011).

One of the respondents expressed her experiences in times of calamities as Barangay Mabini is prone to such.

**Table 6: Community Needs in relation to Environmental Conservation**

| Indicators                                                                                      | WM          | DI                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Awareness on the importance of protecting and conserving the environment.                       | 4.63        | HN                   |
| Participation of residents in local clean-up drives, tree planting, or recycling programs.      | 4.57        | HN                   |
| Regular information campaigns on waste segregation and ecological solid waste management.       | 4.61        | HN                   |
| Proper waste disposal facilities, such as segregated bins and collection schedules              | 4.68        | HN                   |
| Effective water conservation measures                                                           | 4.59        | HN                   |
| Environmental education and training programs in the barangay.                                  | 4.65        | HN                   |
| Knowledge about the effects of pollution and climate change.                                    | 4.62        | HN                   |
| Visible efforts by local leaders to implement environmental conservation policies and projects. | 4.66        | HN                   |
| Additional resources and support from government and NGOs to sustain environmental programs.    | 4.71        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                                                                    | <b>4.63</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 6 shows that the community needs in relation to environmental conservation were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.63. This means that the community places a high premium on environmental conservation, encompassing awareness, education, infrastructure, governance, and inter-agency collaboration.

The indicator that garnered the highest weighted mean was additional resources and support from government and NGOs to sustain environmental programs (WM = 4.71), suggesting that respondents strongly recognized the importance of external institutional support in maintaining environmental initiatives at the community level. This was closely followed by proper waste disposal facilities, such as segregated bins and collection schedules (WM = 4.68), and visible efforts by local leaders to implement environmental conservation policies and projects (WM = 4.66).

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest weighted mean was participation of residents in local clean-up drives, tree planting, or recycling programs (WM = 4.57), though it was still rated Highly Needed, indicating that community-based environmental participation remains a significant concern.

*“Alam naman natin na prone ang Barangay Mabini sa pagbaha lalo na kapag malakas ang ulan at may bagyo. Marami sa amin ang malapit sa ilog kaya dapat magkaroon ng training ng DRRM hindi lang sa mga barangay officials gayundin sa mga residente.” – Participant 8*

(We all know that Barangay Mabini is prone to flooding, especially when it rains hard and there's a typhoon. Many of us live near the river, so there should be Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) training not just for barangay officials but also for the residents.)

These results are consistent with the growing body of literature emphasizing that sustainable environmental management requires both bottom-up community engagement and top-down policy support (Ostrom, 1990; DENR, 2021).

During the interview, one discussed the need to collaborate with the government and NGOs to sustain environmental programs.

*“Dahil prone kami sa pagbaha, kailangan din ng mga programa pangkalikasan. Tree planting, clean up drives at iba pa. Pero kailangan din na magkaroon ng suporta mula sa pamahalaang local at mga private organization para masustain natin yung mga programs. May mga pagkakataon kasi na nahihinto siya dahil kulang sa support at sa resources.” – Participant 7*

(Because we are prone to flooding, we also need environmental programs. Tree planting, clean-up drives, and others. But we also need to have support from the local government and private organizations so that we can sustain those programs. There are times when they stop because of lack of support and resources.)

**Table 7: Community Needs in relation to Organizational Planning and Management**

| Indicators                                       | WM          | DI                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Proper conduct of district (purok) meeting.      | 4.56        | HN                   |
| District (Purok) office management.              | 4.58        | HN                   |
| Policy making and implementation.                | 4.62        | HN                   |
| Practice of due process in raising concerns.     | 4.60        | HN                   |
| Crafting of barangay ordinances and resolutions. | 4.98        | HN                   |
| Writing a letter and minutes.                    | 4.95        | HN                   |
| Knowledge on forming a community organization.   | 4.63        | HN                   |
| Management of community resources.               | 4.68        | HN                   |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                     | <b>4.68</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 7 presents that the community needs in relation to organizational planning and management were highly needed, with an average weighted mean of 4.68. This indicates that the community places considerable importance on strengthening organizational planning and management capacities, particularly in the areas of policy formulation, documentation, and resource governance.

The indicator that obtained the highest weighted mean was crafting of barangay ordinances and resolutions (WM = 4.98), reflecting the community's strong recognition of the need for formal legislative instruments at the barangay level to guide governance and address local concerns. This was closely followed by writing a letter and minutes (WM = 4.95), underscoring the perceived importance of proper documentation and communication skills among barangay officials and community members. Management of community resources ranked third (WM = 4.68), highlighting the community's awareness that effective resource stewardship is essential to sustaining local programs and services.

Likewise, the indicators with comparatively lower weighted means were proper conduct of district (purok) meeting (WM = 4.56) and district (purok) office management (WM = 4.58), though both remained within the Highly Needed range, suggesting that grassroots-level organizational functioning is still considered a priority concern.

This finding aligns with the argument of Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) that effective local governance hinges on the institutional capacity of community-level organizations to craft, implement, and monitor policies. Similarly, Brillantes and Moscare (2002) emphasized that barangay governance in the Philippine context requires continuous capacity building, particularly in legislation and administrative management, to ensure responsive and accountable local leadership.

Furthermore, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2009) noted that community organizations are more likely to sustain development programs when equipped with sound planning, resource management, and documentation practices.

**Table 8: Summary Table of Community Needs**

| Indicators                                    | WM          | DI                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Education and Parenting                       | 4.57        | Highly Needed        |
| Food Safety and Hygiene                       | 4.72        | Highly Needed        |
| Human Rights and Violence Awareness           | 4.48        | Highly Needed        |
| Livelihood and Financial Literacy             | 4.75        | Highly Needed        |
| Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) | 4.59        | Highly Needed        |
| Environmental Conservation                    | 4.63        | Highly Needed        |
| Organizational Planning and Management        | 4.68        | Highly Needed        |
| <b>Average Weighted Mean</b>                  | <b>4.63</b> | <b>Highly Needed</b> |

Table 9 presents the summary of community needs. As shown, the community highly needed programs or projects that could cater to livelihood and financial literacy (WM=4.75) followed by food safety and hygiene (WM=4.72). Organizational planning and management, with a mean of 4.68, are highly needed by the residents in the community. Respondents agree that they highly need to practice environmental conservation (WM=4.63). In addition, respondents emphasize Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) (WM=4.59) as they highly need it. Moreover, education and parenting (WM=4.57) and Human Rights and Violence Awareness (WM=4.48) were also highly needed.

As the findings revealed, Alarte (2022) demonstrates that a program to improve their living conditions is necessary. As part of his recommendation, in collaboration with the local government and the school, measures should be taken to enhance the community's standard of living by expanding research-based community services.

In addition, Amidu et al. (2021) found that financial literacy must be prioritized because it helps make the livelihood program sustainable. Financial education enhances financial inclusion, and the interaction between financial inclusion and financial education improves the livelihood of households. These findings suggest that inclusive finance resulting from financial literacy promotes sustainable livelihoods.

The current findings indicate that the community has a significant need for food safety and hygiene. Food safety remains a concern in both developing and developed countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) has therefore identified five primary factors that contribute to

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safer food: sanitation, separation of raw and cooked food, comprehensive cooking, maintenance of food at safe temperatures, and use of safe water and raw materials (Fasoro et al., 2016).

How to empower and equip community leaders with knowledge about effective organization is highly needed. According to Monteiro (2014), local organizations have shown initiative and utilized their political orientations and strategies to enhance public services. In the co-construction and co-production of public policies, civil society organizations remain essential and active agents.

### **IV. DISCUSSION**

Education and Parenting obtained an average weighted mean of 4.56, with training for parental involvement in children's learning (WM = 4.88) and seminars on responsible parenting (WM = 4.77) as the top-rated indicators. Learning gaps in reading, writing, and mathematics were also identified, alongside psychosocial concerns such as stress management and limited access to school supplies.

Food Safety and Hygiene yielded the second highest average weighted mean of 4.72. Community clean-up drives (WM = 4.82) and solid waste management practices (WM = 4.80) were the most critical needs, alongside access to potable water, personal hygiene, and food safety awareness, underscoring both infrastructural and behavioral dimensions of public health.

Human Rights and Violence Awareness recorded an average weighted mean of 4.48. The community strongly prioritized awareness of violence against women, men, and children (WM = 4.88), drug symposia (WM = 4.78), and crime prevention seminars (WM = 4.73). Notably, seminars on human rights law (WM = 3.39) were the only indicator rated Moderately Needed, suggesting that immediate safety concerns are perceived as more urgent than legal literacy.

Livelihood and Financial Literacy garnered the highest average weighted mean of 4.75 across all domains. Financial literacy on livelihood programs (WM = 4.92), knowledge on livelihood activities such as backyard gardening and animal raising (WM = 4.86), and training for livelihood volunteering projects (WM = 4.80) emerged as the most pressing needs, highlighting the community's strong desire for economic empowerment and financial independence.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) obtained an average weighted mean of 4.59, with financial and technical assistance for disaster preparedness (WM = 4.72) and effective coordination with local government units (WM = 4.69) as the highest-rated indicators. The results reflect the community's acute awareness of its vulnerability to disasters and the urgent need for preparedness, response, and resilience-building programs.

Environmental Conservation yielded an average weighted mean of 4.63. The community's foremost need was additional resources and support from government and NGOs (WM =

4.71), followed by proper waste disposal facilities (WM = 4.68) and visible leadership in implementing environmental policies (WM = 4.66), pointing to the necessity of both institutional support and community-level environmental action.

Organizational Planning and Management recorded an average weighted mean of 4.68. The crafting of barangay ordinances and resolutions (WM = 4.98) and writing letters and minutes (WM = 4.95) were rated the highest, underscoring the community's recognition of the need for stronger governance frameworks, documentation.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: Barangay Mabini exhibits a significant need for structured parenting and educational support programs. The high demand for parental involvement training and responsible parenting seminars concludes that many parents are willing to engage in their children's education but lack the necessary knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Consistently high ratings across all food safety and hygiene indicators lead to the conclusion that the community faces serious challenges in sanitation, safe food handling, and access to clean water. The strong demand for community clean-up drives and solid waste management reflects an urgent need for behavior change and environmental health interventions, as inadequate hygiene practices pose significant risks to public health and community well-being. The community is highly vulnerable to violence, drug-related issues, and crime, necessitating immediate and sustained awareness campaigns. While respondents recognize the importance of legal literacy, the comparatively lower rating for human rights law seminars suggests that practical safety programs are perceived as more immediately relevant than theoretical legal education, indicating a need to balance both approaches in future interventions.

The highest-rated domain in the study leads to the conclusion that economic vulnerability is the most pressing concern of the community. The strong demand for financial literacy programs and livelihood training reflects that many residents lack the financial knowledge and practical skills needed to achieve economic stability.

Given Barangay Mabini's proneness to flooding and other disasters, the findings conclude that the community is insufficiently equipped in terms of disaster preparedness, response mechanisms, and resilience-building capacities. The high demand for financial and technical assistance, coordination with LGUs, and community-based disaster drills confirms that DRRM must be treated as a priority concern in community development planning.

While the community is aware of environmental issues, sustaining conservation initiatives remains a major challenge due to limited resources and insufficient institutional support. The strong call for government and NGO collaboration

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reflects a recognition that environmental conservation cannot be achieved through community efforts alone and requires coordinated multi-stakeholder action.

Barangay governance and community organizational capacities need significant strengthening. The high demand for skills in crafting ordinances, documentation, and resource management indicates that many community leaders and residents lack the administrative competencies required for effective and accountable local governance.

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### **VII. DISCLOSURE**

The author declares that there are no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the conduct, results, or interpretation of this study.

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