

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

FGD GUIDE FOR CITY PROGRAM COORDINATORS OF ICMA

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

This instrument will be used for focus group discussion with City Program Coordinators (CPCs) of ICMA. The evaluation team will conduct the FGD via ZOOM.

There are four areas of questions in this instrument. These are:

- The CPCs role in the intervention process
- CPCs perceptions about interventions conducted and their effect on beneficiaries
- The challenges CPCs encountered and how these can be improved
- Sustainability of projects

Before starting the FGD, the facilitators will seek respondents' consent by sending a copy of the INFORMED CONSENT FORM to the participants. Upon confirmation of their intent to participate, the participants should send back the completed form with their electronic signature. The FGD will not start without the completed form.

Except when internet connectivity is a problem, please request participants to turn on their cameras for recording purposes. At the minimum, the cameras should be turned on: at the beginning, end, and when the participants speak. Turning cameras on will verify the speaker.

As a reminder, participants should mute themselves while someone is talking.

OPENING SPIEL

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for joining us today. Your participation is essential to determine the extent of achievement on the outputs and outcomes of SURGE.

I am _____. We are external evaluators supporting the Panagora Group in the conduct of the evaluation on SURGE. _____ will be joining us.

We will be recording our session. You will need to accept the recording before you are allowed to continue. We will now begin recording.

May I clarify at this point if you have submitted a signed Informed Consent Form and retained a signed copy? If not, may I request you to exit the session and e-mail us your signed consent form? You may re-enter once we receive the form.

Has anyone of you participated in an FGD before? (If yes, proceed to the next paragraph. If no, continue as follows). Let me tell you what happens in an FGD. We will ask a general question, and anyone can take

the lead to answer the question. Then, the next participant either agrees or disagrees with the statement, explaining the reasons for it. The conversations continue until the facilitator asks another question).

I wish to reiterate that your participation in this FGD is voluntary, and you may exit at any point, even without informing us. Should you opt-out, we will strike from our records all statements made by you.

For those who will continue with us, we wish to assure you that our conversation will remain confidential and will be discussed only within the research team led by Ramon Noriel Sicad of the CLAIMDev team. Should we use any of the statements you made in our report, we will seek prior approval to do so. You may then inform us whether you would like the information stricken or included in the report and whether or not you would like the information to be attributed to you.

Our FGD for today should last no more than two (2) hours. Should our conversations be animated, we will interject with time checks. So that we remain organized, may we request you to raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged if you would like to speak? For others, you may want to use the chatbox to share your views.

We ask that you keep your cameras on for documentation purposes. Should you experience connectivity problems, we request that the cameras be turned on at the beginning and end of the session, at least when you speak.

Do you have any questions?

Now that we have addressed all questions, we will now start our session. We ask that you kindly mute your audio and open only when you are acknowledged to speak. In our chatbox, kindly indicate “okay” so that we can proceed. We will be recording our session. You will need to accept the recording before you are allowed to continue. We will now begin recording.

For the record, may we have one round of introductions? Please tell us your name, your city of assignment, and the inclusive dates you were a CPC in that city?

FGD QUESTIONS

How did you view your role in the SURGE activity (30 minutes)

1. What was your role in the SURGE activity?
2. How aware are you of the goals of the SURGE activity? Where did you gain your knowledge?
3. How involved were you in the planning of the SURGE interventions?
4. How were you prepared for your role? Were there skill sets that helped you with your task?
5. What is the typical process you undertake with each intervention?
6. Were you able to introduce any innovations in accomplishing your task?

What is your perception about the interventions conducted, the process, and its effect on beneficiaries? (40 minutes)

7. In your perception, were the interventions relevant to the beneficiaries?
8. In your opinion, did the beneficiaries gain from the interventions?
9. Were the interventions implemented correctly? Could it have been done better?
10. Were the intended beneficiaries reached?

What are the challenges you encountered and how it can be improved? (20 minutes)

11. What challenges did you experience in doing your task?
12. Are there aspects of the intervention that you could have done differently?
13. Are there other kinds of support you would have needed to make you more effective?
14. How could SURGE be more effective in the city you served

Sustainability

15. Do you think that the city will be able to continue the projects without the presence of SURGE/ICMA/CPC?

COVID RELATED QUESTIONS:

1. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt SURGE addressed? Elaborate.
2. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt you needed more assistance? Elaborate.
3. Were there any projects that were delayed due to COVID-19? Will the delay impact the effective implementation of the project?

CLOSING SPIEL

We wish to thank you for your active participation in this FGD. We appreciate the time you have taken to be with us today to contribute to an honest evaluation of the interventions through SURGE. We have learned a lot from our session. We hope that you have found this session as helpful and educational as we have.

We wish to remind you that our session today will be held in the strictest confidence. We will contact you in the future should we use any of the statements you made in our report. If you have additional information that you want to share with us but were unable to do so, please feel free to contact us to schedule an interview at a later date.

Continue to keep safe. Mabuhay ang Pilipinas. We will now end the recording.

FGD GUIDE FOR BUSINESS SECTOR AND MSMES

General Instructions, opening spiel, and closing spiel are similar to Annex 14.

FGD QUESTIONS:

Awareness and perceptions about SURGE (40 minutes)

1. Are you familiar with the SURGE activity of the USAID? How did you come to know about it? Are you familiar with International City/County Management Association (ICMA)? How did you come to know of it?
2. Do you think that the SURGE was able to improve conditions in your city? Can you elaborate?
3. Let us move to the theme of resiliency. What are your perceptions about how SURGE has helped improve local capacity in inclusive and resilient urban management and processes? Were the interventions suited to your cities' needs? Can you be more specific?
4. Let us move to the theme of economic development. What are our perceptions about how SURGE has helped the environment for local economic development? Were the interventions suited to your cities' needs? Can you be more specific?
5. Let us move to the theme of urban-rural connectivity. What are your perceptions about how SURGE has helped connectivity and access between urban and rural areas? Were the interventions suited to your cities' needs? Can you be more specific?
6. Let us move to the theme of inclusivity. What are your perceptions about how SURGE has been inclusive in its interventions? Were the interventions suited to your cities' needs? Please use your definition of inclusivity.

Involvement or lack of participation in the process (30 minutes)

7. Was the business group consulted in the selection and design of interventions in your city?
8. What role did the business group have in the selection, design, and implementation of the intervention?
9. How satisfied are you in the involvement of the business group in the selection, design, and implementation of the intervention?
10. Were there any hurdles the business group encountered during collaborative efforts with ICMA?

Covid Related Questions:

11. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt SURGE addressed? Elaborate.
12. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt you needed more assistance? Elaborate.
13. Were there any projects that were delayed due to COVID-19? Will the delay impact the effective implementation of the project?

Recommendations for improvement (20 minutes)

14. Were any of the interventions covered by other donors and therefore rendered the SURGE intervention superfluous?
15. Are there other interventions you would have wanted to see implemented in your city?

16. Do you think the city still needs assistance from donors to improve the cities competitiveness? What could you suggest as improvements to aid extended to your city?

Sustainability

17. Do you think that the city will be able to continue the projects without SURGE/ICMA?

18. Are there any other items you wish to discuss?

FGD GUIDE FOR THE ACADEME/UDLP

General Instructions, opening spiel, and closing spiel are similar to Annex 14.

FGD QUESTIONS

1. Are you familiar with the SURGE activity of the USAID? How did you come to know about it? Are you familiar with International City/County Management Association (ICMA)? How did you come to know of it?
2. What was the role of the academe in ensuring that the SURGE activities are relevant in addressing the development priorities outlined in city/local development plans? (1.3.3)
3. What specific interventions have the Academe introduced that contributed to the success of the SURGE? How were these conceptualized? In what component of the SURGE are these applicable?
4. What are the prospects that the outcomes and intermediate results generated by the project in your institution will continue after project completion without further assistance from SURGE? (3.1)
5. Are technical, institutional, and financial capacities adequate to ensure continuity to project activities? (3.1.1) What is the likelihood that your institutions will take ownership of the interventions initiated by SURGE? (3.1.1.1)
6. With what SURGE introduced in your institution, are there opportunities for replicating such in the future? What are these opportunities, and why do you consider them as such? (3.4)
7. Are there plans by your institutions to replicate or expand any of the SURGE interventions in the future? (3.4.1)

FGD GUIDE FOR LGU STAFF AND PERSONNEL

General Instructions, opening spiel, and closing spiel are similar to Annex 14.

FGD QUESTIONS

1. Are you familiar with the SURGE activity of the USAID? How did you come to know about it? Are you familiar with International City/County Management Association (ICMA)? How did you come to know of it?
2. What activities/projects in your city did SURGE support? (Q2.4.1)?

[Possible answers below]

- Component 1 Activity examples (Mainstreaming DRR and CCA in local development plans; Training on GHG management planning; Establishing Urban Development Learning Program; Upgrading of water services of water service providers (e.g., water safety planning, non-revenue water (NRW) management, enhanced billing and collection, water demand management, etc.); Strengthening institutional capacities on sanitation (e.g., septage management, etc.)
 - Component 2 Activity examples (Streamlining/automating business permitting and licensing processes; Streamlining/automating construction permitting processes; Setting up of One-Stop-Shop for BPLS and construction permitting; Training of Local Economic and Investment Promotion Office and Business Support Organizations; etc.)
 - Component 3 Activity examples (Establishing market linkages between local producers and buyers, e.g., seaweed, cassava; formulating tourism development plans, establishing inter-LGU cooperation, e.g., Panglao Daus and Tagbilaran Executive Council in Bohol; etc.)
3. In your opinion, what significant changes, benefits, outcomes, or value-added resulted from SURGE activities in your city? (Q2.1, Q2.1.1, Q2.2, Q2.2.1, Q2.3, Q2.3.1)

[Possible answers below]

- Component 1 Benefit/Outcome examples (Updated risk-sensitive, inclusive CLUPs; enhanced skills of LGU personnel in preparing risk-sensitive, inclusive plans, strengthened capacity of WDs/WSPs for water/sanitation service delivery, etc.)
 - Component 2 Benefit/Outcome examples (Improved CMC Index, increase in new business registrations, increase in locally sourced revenues; updated land administration and information management system; etc.)
 - Component 3 Benefit/Outcome examples (Increased investments in CDI and peri-urban areas, policy and regulatory reforms in business/construction permitting, improved transport services, e.g., increased cargo movement from General Santos airport, etc.)
4. In your opinion, which local government functions/operations did the SURGE activity generate the most significant contribution? Please elaborate (Q2.4.2)

5. What key factors facilitated or contributed to the achievement of these changes, benefits, or outcomes? (Q2.1.1.1, Q2.2.1.1, Q2.3.1.1)
6. What key issues/challenges have hindered achieving the intended benefits or outcomes of SURGE activities in your city? How did the SURGE project address these issues/challenges? ((Q2.1.1.1, Q2.1.1.2 Q2.2.1.1, Q2.2.1.2, Q2.3.1.1, Q2.3.1.2)
7. How relevant or responsive were the SURGE activities/interventions in addressing the development priorities of your city as articulated in your Comprehensive Development Plan? How can SURGE activities/interventions be improved to enhance its responsiveness to local development priorities? (Q1.3.3, Q1.3.3.1)
8. How relevant or responsive were the SURGE activities/interventions in addressing the needs of key stakeholders (e.g., city officials) and target beneficiaries (e.g., business owners, etc.) (Q1.3.4, Q1.3.4.1)
9. What sustainability mechanisms were put in place by the SURGE project to ensure that the SURGE initiatives and gains will continue after project completion in December 2021? What were the exit strategies developed by SURGE? (Q3.2, Q3.2.1, Q3.1.2)
10. How do you assess the city's current technical, institutional, and financial capacity to sustain or ensure the continuity of SURGE initiatives/activities? (Q3.1.1)
11. Are policies in place to ensure continuity of SURGE activities/initiatives in your city? Do you think these policies are adequate for LGUs to take ownership and continue/expand the SURGE initiatives in your city? (Q3.1.2, Q3.1.1.1)
12. What key lessons have you learned from the implementation of the SURGE activity in your city? Which of the SURGE interventions, practices, and approaches worked well and should be continued or expanded by similar projects in the future? What were the facilitating factors? (Q2.9, Q2.9.1, Q2.9.1.2, Q2.9.2)
13. Which interventions, practices, or approaches did not work? What were the hindering factors? (Q2.9, Q2.9.1, Q2.9.1.2, Q2.9.2)
14. If SURGE could be re-designed or implemented differently, what changes or modifications would you propose to improve the effectiveness of the SURGE interventions in your city?

COVID RELATED QUESTIONS:

4. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt SURGE addressed? Elaborate.
5. Were there needs that arose as a result of COVID-19 that you felt you needed more assistance? Elaborate.
6. Were there any projects that were delayed due to COVID-19? Will the delay impact the effective implementation of the project?