



Republic of the Philippines
Province of Eastern Samar
City of Borongan
OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR



September 30, 2019

MS. THEA TSULUKIANI

Minister of Justice
Government of Georgia

MR. SCOTT BRISON

President of the Treasury Board
Government of Canada

MR. MUKELANI DIMBA

Head of Development
International School of Transparency

MR. NATHANIEL HELLER

Executive Vice President for Integrated
Strategies Results for Development

Dear Open Government Partnership Co-Chairs,

The City Government of Borongan hereby expresses its desire to join the OGP Local Program. We are grateful to OGP Local that we are invited to submit this Full Application.

Primarily, the City would like to share our open government reforms to the global community through this international initiative. We believe that other countries and local governments may learn from what we are doing. We may be a small city, with a population of nearly 70,000, and achieved cityhood status only in 2007, but we know that the reforms we have been doing over the past years placed us where we are now. These reforms are what we are excited to share to the international community. On the other hand, we know that being part of an international initiative like OGP can teach us to become better at what we do as public servants.

We would like to learn from OGP how we can further enhance our processes, capacities, technology, systems, and structures towards being more open, accountable, transparent, and participatory. Especially with the current pandemic, we saw that we can benefit from the Open Reform and Open Recovery campaign of OGP, as well as working towards digital governance, which is one of our current priorities. Our end goal in wanting to improve our processes and systems is to efficiently, satisfactorily, and responsively meet

the needs of our constituents. They are, first and foremost, our utmost concern in joining OGP.

To highlight our experience in co-creation and co-implementation, the City Government of Borongan had been a beneficiary of the Bottom-up Budgeting (BuB) Program of the national government from 2013 until 2016, and under its rebranded program Assistance to Municipalities from 2017 up to present. The BuB Program is an empowerment program where local government create Local Poverty Reduction Action Teams (LPRATs) composed of equal number of government and non-government members who will develop Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs). The LPRAPs were funded by the national government. The BuB is also a program awarded with the Open Government Award of OGP in 2014. Under the BuB, the City Government availed funding support from different national government agencies namely; Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Department of Agriculture (DA). Through BuB, the City Government was able to provide livelihood assistance to marginalized groups such as Parent Leaders Association of Borongan, Community-Based Resource Management Association, and Women's Association. In partnership with DILG and DA, we constructed social infrastructures such as evacuation center, hanging footbridge and farm-to-market roads. During the implementation of these projects, the City Government partnered with local CSOs in the monitoring activities.

With the current pandemic, the City Government also made sure that our people are aware of our response and recovery efforts so they can avail of these services. We posted in our official Facebook page, managed by the City Information Office (CIO), the status of COVID19 positive cases. We have a radio program, Dukwag Program, started early this year where we broadcast programs and projects of the different departments as well as their accomplishments. We also broadcast upcoming activities to inform our constituents and get their involvement and participation. Anyone can call in or send message via various platforms for the citizens' concerns.

As proof of our capacity to meet OGP's requirements in crafting and implementing a local action plan, the City Government has enough capacity and resources to carry out the specified activities. The City will assign the Office of the Mayor and the City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) as the focal unit for OGP and the Head Executive Assistant (HEA) of the Mayor together with the OIC-City Planning and Development Coordinator (CPDC) as OGP focal persons. The CPDO will lead in the co-creation process. The CPDO also has sufficient funds to undertake activities for co-creation, such as convening meetings and consultations, managing prioritization of commitments, development of plan, and liaising with government and non-government stakeholders. The same mechanism involving multi-stakeholders utilized by the city government in developing its local plans (e.g., Local Development Investment Plan, Annual Investment Plan, Executive Legislative Agenda) will be adopted for OGP.

In terms of implementation, the Office of the Mayor and the CPDO serves as oversight in monitoring the city government's programs. This role can also be carried out for the local OGP Plan.

More importantly, the City Government has long been in partnership with the non-government sector in terms of crafting plans, implementing programs and projects, monitoring, and other local governance processes. This holds true when we convene our City Development Council where CSOs are members. Under the CDC, the programs, activities and projects of the city government is being discussed through the representation of both the local government and the non-government members. The council provides a space for collaborative discussion of the city's priorities and strategic plans. Currently, our CDC membership includes farmers' groups, women's organizations, business groups, rotary club, professional groups (e.g., Civil Engineers), faith-based organizations like Caritas, to name some.

At present, the City Government of Borongan is a member of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) and Regional Development Council (RDC) for Eastern Visayas. Membership in LCP spans to 145 cities of the country, and we see this as an opportunity to promote the principles of open government to other like-minded and reform-oriented local governments in the League. Further, the RDC is considered the highest policy-making body in the region and serves as the counterpart of the NEDA Board at the subnational level. The RDC is the primary institution that coordinates and sets the direction of all economic and social development efforts in the region. It also serves as a forum where local efforts can be related and integrated with national development activities. Government and non-government members are present in the RDC and we see this as an ideal platform where we can inform and advocate about open government. We also see the RDC as a venue for our commitments to be integrated into the Regional Development Plan, for possible replication or expansion in other cities and provinces in our region.

We would like to learn how to use open government principles to better meet the needs of our citizens. The City Government is willing to participate in peer learning and sharing experiences, both within the cohort and with other Locals in their respective countries and thematic circles with other potential cohorts. We will maximize the mentorship program and knowledge products to be offered by OGP especially as the City leverages into technology-based digital governance as one of the priorities of the current local administration.

In turn, we think we can contribute good practices and lessons learned to other participating governments in the following areas:

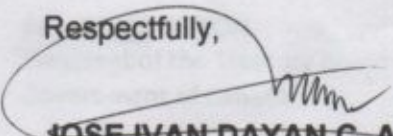
- a) Health - The "Libreng Gamot", a priority program intended to give free medicine assistance to all Borongan residents regardless of affiliations. Under this program, the city government will establish barangay health stations and pharmacy in strategically located barangays.
- b) Youth and youth engagement – This is a program intended to give value re-orientation training/seminar/workshops thru peer group activities.

- c) Water and sanitation – The city government of Borongan is establishing a co-venture with the Local Water District thru bulk water supply arrangement.
- d) Agriculture - "Dukwag Agrikultura" one of the priority programs of this administration, geared to improve agricultural productivity and uplift the plight of the marginal agricultural workers sector.

Above all, we believe that joining OGP Local is an embodiment of the local government's commitment to our people to uphold good and open governance. We embrace the principles of open government and proof of this is our commitment to be part of OGP.

We hope that our application will merit your consideration.

Respectfully,


JOSE IVAN DAYAN C. AGDA, CoE.
City Mayor

National School of Transparency

Mr. Athanasio N. Nolasco
Executive Vice President for Integrated
Strategic Services for Development

Dear Open Government Partnership Co-Leads:

The City Government of Borongan hereby expresses its desire to join the OGP Local Program and we are grateful to OGP Local that we are invited to submit this Full Application.

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We would like to learn from other countries and local governments about their open government systems and the roles of citizens and the participatory. Especially with the current situation of the country, the Open Reform and Good Recovery program of OGP, as well as women empowerment, which is one of our current programs, we believe that joining OGP can help us improve our processes and systems to be efficient, effective and accountable.