



**Socioeconomic Impact Of Department Of Social Welfare And Development's (DSWD'S)  
Implementation Of Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) 2021 At Del Carmen, Siargao Islands,  
Surigao Del Norte**

**Dawn Jhean Marie M. Petallo**

LGU-Del Carmen, Del Carmen, Siargao Island Surigao Del Norte

Email: dawn.petallo@gmail.com

ORCID: 0009-0000-3838-9582

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**Abstract**

This study evaluates the socioeconomic impact of the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) implemented in 2021 within the community of Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, and Surigao Del Norte. The primary objective is to assess the program's effectiveness in enhancing the economic conditions and overall well-being of its beneficiaries. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, the study involved 100 beneficiaries of the SLP-Livelihood Assistance Grant Program, each of whom received a grant of P15, 000 in 2021. Data collection encompassed both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, and subsequent analysis employed statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, Kruskal-Wallis Test, and Spearman Rho Correlation. The findings reveal that the SLP has yielded substantial positive impacts on the lives of participants, notably enhancing income levels, employment rates, and overall quality of life. These improvements underscore the program's efficacy in fostering economic empowerment and social well-being within the community. However, the study also identifies areas where further attention and intervention are required. Specifically, challenges persist in promoting environmental sustainability and facilitating asset acquisition among beneficiaries. Based on these findings, the study proposes several recommendations to optimize the program's impact. These recommendations include integrating training on environmentally sustainable practices into the program, facilitating access to asset acquisition mechanisms such as grants and microfinance, tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of beneficiaries based on their income levels, establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems, and promoting a holistic program design that encompasses not only economic empowerment but also social and environmental well-being. Addressing these identified challenges and implementing the proposed recommendations, the positive impact of the SLP can be amplified, contributing to sustainable community development and a marked improvement in the quality of life for beneficiaries in Del Carmen.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), Socioeconomic Impact, Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Livelihood Assistance Grant (LAG), Poverty Alleviation

**1. Introduction**

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the Philippines, represents a crucial endeavor in the ongoing battle against poverty. This program is designed to equip marginalized communities with the necessary resources and knowledge to enhance their economic standing and cultivate long-term resilience (DSWD, 2021). In contrast to short-term aid initiatives, SLPs prioritize empowering individuals to establish and sustain their own income sources, thereby fostering self-sufficiency and promoting community development. The significance of the SLP is particularly pronounced in rural regions like Del Carmen in Surigao Del Norte, where economic opportunities are scarce, and a considerable number of families grapple with poverty. Del Carmen, categorized as a 5th class municipality, faces a unique set of challenges and opportunities concerning the implementation of livelihood programs. Its geographical isolation and

limited market access have historically hindered economic progress, making it a prime target for poverty alleviation efforts. However, with adequate support and resources, there is substantial potential for positive transformation in the community (Bautista & Reyes, 2022).

While the DSWD's SLP has garnered recognition for its role in poverty reduction, there remains a dearth of in-depth research that examines its specific impact within local contexts such as Del Carmen. The majority of existing literature has concentrated on the program's nationwide effects, leaving a gap in understanding its efficacy at the community level (De la Cruz et al., 2019). This study endeavors to address this gap by meticulously analyzing the socio-economic consequences of the SLP for the residents of Del Carmen. The research investigates the effects of the SLP on participants' livelihoods since its implementation in 2021. By assessing factors such as income changes, employment opportunities, and social inclusion, this study aspires to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the program's success. The findings will not only enhance comprehension of the SLP's impact in Del Carmen but also offer valuable insights for refining future livelihood strategies in comparable environments.

### *Conceptual Framework*

The study investigated how participant characteristics, including age, marital status, family size, and types of livelihoods, influenced the social and economic impacts of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). It evaluated the program's effectiveness by examining changes in community involvement, social networks, and overall quality of life as indicators of social impact. Additionally, it assessed variations in income, employment status, and financial stability to gauge the economic impact. The findings were then translated into actionable recommendations to enhance the SLP's design and implementation, ultimately supporting continuous program improvement and sustainable development in the community.

### *Statement of the Problem*

This research seeks to assess the socio-economic impact of the DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program on beneficiaries in Del Carmen. The study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the profiles of the respondents (age, civil status, family size, type of livelihood, and income)?
2. What is the perceived social and economic impact of the SLP on participants?
3. Are there significant differences in impacts when grouped based on participant profiles?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the social and economic impacts?
5. What recommendations can be made based on the findings?

### *Significance of the Study*

The findings of this study hold value for a wide range of stakeholders. Local Government Units and Policymakers can utilize these insights to develop more targeted and effective poverty reduction strategies. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) can use the findings to refine and enhance program implementation. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Development Practitioners can gain evidence-based insights for designing responsive community development projects. The research also contributes to the broader academic and research communities focusing on poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Importantly, the residents of Del Carmen stand to benefit directly as the study sheds light on the SLP's impact on their lives, empowering them to advocate for more effective programs and play an active role in their development. Finally, the insights gleaned will inform the design of future livelihood programs, ensuring they are better tailored to the needs of participants and ultimately leading to more impactful initiatives. This study focuses on the Livelihood Assistance Grant (LAG) track of the SLP implemented in Del Carmen since December 2021. Most respondents are women involved in sewing, as prioritized by local leadership. The analysis is limited to participant perceptions gathered through surveys and interviews.

## **2. Literature Review**

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), established by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the Philippines, aims to enhance the socio-economic well-being of disadvantaged communities. A pivotal component of this program is the Livelihood Assistance Grant (LAG), which provides financial aid to

beneficiaries to initiate or enhance income-generating activities. This review synthesizes various studies to explore the multifaceted impacts of LAG, encompassing economic improvement, employment generation, productivity enhancement, social inclusion, empowerment, and improvements in education and health, alongside the challenges faced by participants.

LAG has demonstrated a significant positive impact on the economic status of beneficiaries, leading to increased household income and greater financial stability (De la Cruz et al., 2019). This financial aid enables recipients to invest in productive assets, thereby improving business productivity and profitability (Reyes & Santos, 2020). These findings resonate with international observations, where similar financial assistance programs in Southeast Asia have been linked to notable reductions in poverty levels (ADB, 2018).

Beyond economic upliftment, LAG has been instrumental in generating employment and enhancing productivity. Many beneficiaries utilize the grant to establish micro-enterprises, leading to self-employment and the creation of additional jobs within their communities (Tan & Lee, 2021). Research indicates a significant increase in productivity among businesses supported by LAG, aligning with findings from comparable international programs (World Bank, 2017).

The program's positive influence extends to social inclusion and empowerment, particularly among women and marginalized groups. Empowerment through LAG has enabled beneficiaries to participate more actively in community leadership and advocacy roles, which are essential for overcoming poverty and marginalization (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2022). The improved economic conditions resulting from LAG have also had a positive ripple effect on education and health. Increased income has allowed families to invest in their children's education and access better healthcare, contributing to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty (Fernandez et al., 2023). These findings are consistent with international research that links financial support to improve educational and health outcomes (UNICEF, 2019).

Furthermore, LAG has contributed to community development by promoting local economic activity and strengthening social cohesion. Small enterprises and community-managed projects funded by LAG have enhanced local infrastructure, services, and cooperation among community members (DSWD, 2021).

Despite its successes, the LAG faces several challenges. These include inadequate training and skills development, limited market access for micro-enterprises, and delays in fund disbursement, which can disrupt project implementation (Bautista & Reyes, 2022).

To maximize the program's impact, several recommendations emerge from the reviewed studies. Providing comprehensive training in entrepreneurship and financial management, coupled with ongoing support and mentorship, is crucial for empowering beneficiaries to sustain their businesses (Tan & Lee, 2021). Facilitating connections between beneficiaries and broader markets can enhance profitability and business sustainability (Reyes & Santos, 2020). Streamlining administrative processes to ensure prompt grant distribution can prevent operational disruptions (Bautista & Reyes, 2022). Providing access to credit, continuous learning opportunities, and mentorship through partnerships with microfinance institutions and NGOs can further bolster the program's impact (DSWD, 2021). In conclusion, the SLP, through LAG, has demonstrated substantial potential in improving the socio-economic conditions of beneficiaries, fostering economic resilience, social inclusion, and community development. Addressing existing challenges and implementing the aforementioned recommendations can enhance the program's effectiveness and sustainability, ultimately contributing to broader poverty alleviation and community growth in the Philippines.

### 3. Methodology

This study employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach to assess the socio-economic impacts of the Sustainable Livelihood Program in Del Carmen. This research design integrates quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, allowing for a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the program's effects.

In the first phase, quantitative data was collected through surveys distributed to 100 SLP beneficiaries across the 20 barangays of Del Carmen. These surveys focused on key indicators such as income changes, employment status, and overall quality of life. Subsequently, in the second phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with selected beneficiaries to delve deeper into their personal experiences, challenges, and perspectives on the program's implementation and long-term sustainability.

The quantitative data analysis utilized IBM SPSS Statistics, employing statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation, Kruskal-Wallis Test, and Spearman's Rho Correlation to examine the relationships between the social and economic impacts of the program.

Recognizing the ethical considerations inherent in research involving human participants, this study prioritized the privacy and security of its participants. Key issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection were addressed proactively to ensure ethical conduct throughout the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To further prevent conflicts and misunderstandings, the researchers took care to construct clear and concise survey forms and interview methods. Respondents were given ample time to answer questions and were assured of the confidentiality of their identity and any information they chose not to disclose. This approach aimed to foster trust and encourage open communication between the researchers and participants.

#### 4. Results and Discussions

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Profile Variables	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
28-37 years old	3	3.00
38-47 years old	43	43.00
48-57 years old	52	52.00
58 years old and above	2	2.00
<b>Civil Status</b>	<b>Frequency (n=100)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Single	15	15.00
Married	72	72.00
Widow/Widower	4	4.00
Separated	9	9.00
<b>No. of Persons in the Family</b>	<b>Frequency (n=100)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1 – 4	30	30.00
5 – 8	59	59.00
9 and above	11	11.00
<b>Barangay</b>	<b>Frequency (n=100)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Antipolo	4	4.00
Bagacay	3	3.00
Bitoon	5	5.00

Cabugao	4	4.00
Cancohay	5	5.00
Caub	5	5.00
Del Carmen (Pob.)	16	16.00
Domoyog	2	2.00
Esperanza	3	3.00
Halian	5	5.00
Jamoyaon	5	5.00
Katipunan	5	5.005
Lobogon	2	2.00
Mabuhay	5	5.00
Mahayahay	5	5.00
Quezon	2	2.00
San Fernando	5	5.00
San Jose	8	8.00
Sayak	6	6.00
Tuboran	5	5.00
<b>Types of Livelihood Program</b>	<b>Frequency (n=100)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Farming	2	2.00
Livestock and Poultry	1	1.00
Fishing	1	1.00
Sari-sari Store	22	22.00
Sewing/Garments	74	74.00
<b>Family Income</b>	<b>Frequency (n=100)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Below 1.00 (Deficit)	6	6.00
1.00 – 1,000	1	1.00
1,001 – 2,000	3	3.00
2,001 – 3000	1	1.00
More than 3,000	89	89.00

Most study participants were middle-aged (38-57) and married (72%). The program focused on empowering women economically, with sewing as the most common livelihood. Income distribution was positive, with 89% earning over 3,000.

**Table 2. Level of Social Impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Program**

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	VI	QD
1. I am able to help my children/relatives get access to education & skill development opportunities.	3.98	0.20	STA	VH
2. My son/daughter was able to graduate from college.	3.00	0.25	MA	MH
3. I am able to acquire new livelihood skills or upgrade my existing livelihood skills.	3.86	0.49	STA	VH
4. I am able to participate with the different basic livelihood training programs.	3.95	0.30	STA	VH
5. I am able to gain confidence, leadership skills and the spirit of cooperation.	3.85	0.50	STA	VH
6. I am able to foster social cohesion and community engagement with others.	3.50	0.59	STA	VH
7. I am able to engage with different agencies/sector that provide livelihood programs.	3.06	0.40	MA	MH
8. I am able to adopt environmentally friendly approaches in my livelihood activities.	2.18	0.50	SLA	SH
9. Our quality of life improves for we are able to work and earn.	2.24	0.59	SLA	SH
10. I am able to broaden my connections with my co-workers in the livelihood programs we are doing.	2.98	1.02	MA	MH
Average	3.26	0.83	STA	VH

Legend:

Parameter	Verbal Interpretation (VI)	Qualitative Description (QD)
3.25 - 4.00	Strongly Agree (STA)	Very High (VH)
2.50 - 3.24	Moderately Agree (MA)	Moderately High (MH)
1.75 - 2.49	Slightly Agree (SLA)	Slightly High (SH)
1.00 - 1.74	Disagree (D)	Low (L)

Table 2 shows that the Sustainable Livelihood Program, particularly the Livelihood Assistance Grant, has a positive impact on education, skills, confidence, and community engagement. However, there's room for improvement in areas like environmental practices and overall quality of life.

**Table 3. Level of Economic Impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Program**

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	VI	QD
1. I am able to increase our family income.	3.77	0.78	STA	VH
2. I am able to secure sustainable and decent jobs.	3.86	0.40	STA	VH
3. I am able to enhance the level of my present living conditions.	3.76	0.57	STA	VH

4. I am able to buy additional equipment for my livelihood activities.	3.40	0.79	STA	VH
5. I am able to buy assets (land, house, appliances, etc).	1.25	0.59	D	L
6. I am able to improve my access to financial services, such as savings accounts, microcredit or insurance.	3.18	0.83	MA	MH
7. I am able to access affordable credit for my livelihood activities.	2.16	0.84	SLA	SH
8. I am able to sell my products/services at fair prices and earn a sustainable income.	2.17	0.70	SLA	SH
9. I am able to pay my loan/debt on time.	2.30	0.82	SLA	SH
10. I am able to develop and implement effective business plans.	2.08	0.37	SLA	SH
Average	2.79	1.10	MA	MH

Legend:

Parameter Verbal Interpretation (VI)	Qualitative Description (QD)
3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree (STA)	Very High (VH)
2.50 - 3.24 Moderately Agree (MA)	Moderately High (MH)
1.75 - 2.49 Slightly Agree (SLA)	Slightly High (SH)
1.00 - 1.74 Disagree (D)	Low (L)

Table 3 evaluates the economic impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Program, with participants strongly agreeing that the program helps them secure sustainable and decent jobs. This is especially true for those receiving the Livelihood Assistance Grant. However, participants generally disagree that the program helps them acquire assets. Overall, the program has a moderately positive impact on participants' livelihoods, with some variations across different indicators.

**Table 4. Test of Significant Difference of the Social Impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Program**

Profile Variables	Chi-square	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	1.637	0.651	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Civil Status	0.494	0.920	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
No. of Persons in the Family	0.577	0.749	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Barangay	19.668	0.415	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Types of Livelihoods	5.064	0.281	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Family Income	23.173	0.0001	<b>Reject HO1</b>	<b>Significant</b>

Table 4 shows no significant difference in the social impact of the sustainable livelihood program based on age, civil status, number of family members, location (barangay), or program type. However, there is a significant difference in social impact based on the respondent's family income.

**Table 5. Test of Significant Difference of the Economic Impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Program**

Profile Variables	Chi-square	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	2.462	0.482	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Civil Status	2.995	0.392	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
No. of Persons in the Family	0.699	0.705	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Barangay	30.151	0.050	<b>Reject HO1</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Types of Livelihoods	7.092	0.131	Do not reject HO1	Not Significant
Family Income	30.180	0.0001	<b>Reject HO1</b>	<b>Significant</b>



Table 5 shows no significant difference in the economic impact of the sustainable livelihood program based on age, civil status, number of family members, or program type. However, there is a significant difference based on the respondent's location (barangay) and family income.

**Table 6. Significant Relationship between the Social Impact and Economic Impact of the Sustainable Livelihood Programs**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Social Impact vs. Economic Impact	0.458	0.0001	Reject HO2	Significant Positive Relationship

The analysis in Table 6 reveals a significant positive correlation between social and economic impact in sustainable livelihood programs. This suggests that programs designed to improve one aspect are likely to positively influence the other. This knowledge can guide policymakers and program implementers to design more holistic interventions that address both social and economic needs, leading to more sustainable outcomes.

## 5. Conclusion

The Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), specifically through the Livelihood Assistance Grant (LAG), has demonstrably improved the socio-economic conditions of participants in Del Carmen. The program has been particularly successful in fostering income stability, increasing community engagement, and enhancing skill development. These positive outcomes highlight the program's effectiveness in addressing key dimensions of poverty and promoting self-sufficiency.

However, the study also identifies areas for further improvement. The challenge of asset acquisition, such as land and housing, underscores the need for additional financial support mechanisms or interventions that go beyond income generation. Additionally, the relatively low adoption of environmentally sustainable practices suggests a potential area for program enhancement, highlighting the importance of integrating sustainability considerations into livelihood initiatives.

The research underscores the complex interplay between demographic factors and economic variables, with family income emerging as a pivotal factor influencing both social and economic outcomes. This insight emphasizes the importance of tailoring program interventions to the specific needs and circumstances of beneficiaries. Overall, while the SLP has shown promising results, there remains room for further refinement and expansion to fully realize its potential for poverty alleviation and sustainable development in Del Carmen.

The analysis has far-reaching implications for program administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in sustainable development initiatives. Understanding the nuanced dynamics of social and economic impacts, as well as the influence of demographic factors, enables a more targeted and effective approach in program design and implementation.

## 6. Recommendations

To enhance the long-term sustainability of the program, it is recommended to integrate training on environmentally friendly practices like organic farming and waste management into the program curriculum. Furthermore, encouraging beneficiaries to adopt eco-friendly methods in their livelihood activities will help balance economic gains with environmental protection.

Recognizing the persistent challenge of asset acquisition, the program should introduce targeted support programs, such as grants and microfinance options, to assist participants in acquiring essential assets like land or housing. Collaborating with financial institutions to offer affordable credit and savings programs can also facilitate asset acquisition.



The program's effectiveness can be further enhanced by tailoring interventions based on the varying needs of beneficiaries. For instance, designing specific interventions for low-income families, including targeted training and temporary income support, can alleviate financial stress during the skill development phase.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation, with regular feedback loops, are essential to assess the program's impact and make timely adjustments as needed. This ensures that the program remains responsive to the evolving needs of the community and maximizes its effectiveness.

Finally, promoting a holistic program design that integrates services such as healthcare and education support alongside livelihood assistance will address the participants' overall well-being. Engaging local leaders and organizations in the program design and implementation process will ensure that interventions are culturally relevant and aligned with the community's specific needs and aspirations.

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