



**World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework for the Philippines
Meeting Summary
University of Southeastern Philippines, Davao City
June 7, 2019**

The World Bank Group (WBG), with support of the Knowledge for Development Community/Network (KDC), conducted stakeholder consultations for the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) in Davao City. The CPF guides the WBG's focus and priorities for support in the Philippines, including lending and non-lending programs and services. To learn about the views on the important development challenges in the country and in provinces, the WBG and KDC invited faculty members, non-teaching staff, students; government agencies representatives; and business sector to be part of a focus group discussion (FGD).

Consultation Details:

Country Partnership Framework Consultation in Davao		
Social Hall, University of Southeastern Philippines, Davao City		
7 June 2019, 9:00AM – 12:00NN		
Faculty members, non-teaching staff and students	Local Government Unit	Business Sector
82 participants	3 participants	6 participants

Consultation Agenda:



The panelists entertaining questions during the open forum.

- Opening message given by USEP and World Bank
- Presentation of the Philippine Economic Update (PEU)
- Open Forum on the PEU

- Background on the Country Partnership Framework for the Philippines
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on CPF

Discussion Highlights during the FGDs:



K-12 student asking the panelist questions during the open forum.

On the Philippine Economic Update

- *Employment is a serious concern of students.* A large portion of the audience comprised senior high school students, who attended along with their teachers, and college students. They are worried companies are not ready to hire senior high school graduates and will still only hire those with some years of college. SHS students believe that the perception of them upon graduation is still as unskilled and insufficiently educated. Even graduating (IT) college students in Davao are worried about employment, but still hopeful since the region attracts more IT related jobs, especially since Davao continues to boom and transform into a technological city which attracts more companies that create more job opportunities.
- Several concerns were raised on the preparedness of K-12 graduates joining the workforce. Some of them are as follows: *“Is the private sector ready to accept K-12 graduates?”*, *“Is there job tenure for K-12 graduates?”*, *“Will the two years of K-12 go to waste?”*, *“Are there more courses available that can meet one’s fulfillment and financial freedom after K-12 program or university?”* and *“Are K-12 graduates ready to be employed?”*. The issue on mismatched employment was also raised.

On the Philippines’ assets and strengths

- *Filipino values.* Filipinos are work-driven, flexible, talented, intelligent, resilient, and have positive outlook.
- *Natural resources and culture are vital for improving tourism.* Sustainability in tourism must be promoted, specifically the protection of natural resources and ethnic tribes. Natural resources need rehabilitation; communities need to learn how to effectively manage and preserve natural assets.

On the main issues and challenges

- There is a growing number of home-based workers in Davao but no regulation guidance from government, which has meant that when they attempt to file income taxes the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) imposes onerous requirements on them as if they were a business, which dissuades them from revealing an income source. Participants suggested to further adapt regulations for home-based workers.
- *Jobs-skilled mismatched.* Expressed in various ways, the jobs-skills mismatch is frequently mentioned, where graduates at high school and college levels find it difficult to secure good quality jobs that fit their training and preparation level and area of study. Among those with college degrees the competition is still very high such that those who earned degrees from institutions that are not considered elite Universities have a poor chance of securing a high quality job. One proposed measure to help create better fit is to support the involvement of industry experts in the school system and in higher education, and to have close relationships with basic education public schools so they can have inputs in the kinds of skills needed in hiring industries.
- National government programs may be well-designed, but LGUs lack the capacity to implement. At the local level as well, key challenges include no clear investment plan, laws that are not applied (e.g. solid waste management), lack of coordination with national agencies, and inability of LGUs to provide an enabling environment for microenterprises to thrive and flourish.

On the priorities for action

- Give importance to small enterprises;
- Free education to decrease criminality, free health care access, sustainable peace and development for creation of more jobs;
- Improve transportation system in the city;
- More opportunities for PWDs; and
- Security from investment scams
- Nutrition
- Improve public school facilities
- Health
- Infrastructure
- Monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction programs
- DRR/Climate risk mitigation especially in agriculture
- Traffic management system
- Peace and cultural sensitivity