

Study on Leadership Transition in the Philippine NGO Sector



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FOUNDATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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- all the survey respondents and focused group discussion (FGD) participants for providing valuable inputs for the study; and
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ASSOCIATION OF FOUNDATIONS

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Established in 1972, the Association of Foundations is the largest national network of NGOs and Foundations in the Philippines. It has more than 170 members nationwide implementing a variety of programs and projects on education, health and nutrition, livelihood, and environment, to name a few. AF supports its members to enhance their capacities for good governance and program effectiveness, and mobilizes them to shape and participate in the development agenda of the Philippines.

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The Peace and Equity Foundation aspires to drive positive change in poor Filipino household communities by investing in social enterprises that will provide them with viable livelihood and better access to basic services. PEF works with partners who share this vision by developing models and best practices that will steer social enterprises to scale up. Founded in October 2001, PEF is the steward of an endowment fund and registered as a non-stock, non-profit organization based in Quezon City,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4-6
BACKGROUND	7-8
PLANNING FOR LEADERSHIP TRANSITION	9-10
ATTRACTIVENESS	
Executive Director	11-13
NGO Staff	14-15
RETENTION	
Executive Director	16-20
NGO Staff	21-23
UPSKILLING	
Executive Director	24
NGO Staff	25-26
FUTURE OPERATING CONTEXT	27
ANNEX A Respondent Profile: Non-Government Organizations (NGO), Executive Directors and NGO Staff	29
ANNEX B Advisers, Focus Group Discussion Participants and Interviewees	39

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the last couple of years, many of the current non-government organization (NGO) Executive Directors (or their equivalent) started to echo their predecessors' sentiments about the lack of next-generation leaders who can take the reins when they leave. Despite its importance to the sustainability of the organizations, leadership transition has not been given sufficient attention because it competes with other more pressing needs of the organizations. The absence of analysis in this area and the desire to draw up an evidence-based support package in response led the Association of Foundations, with funding support from Peace and Equity Foundation, to conduct a study and help better understand the situation.

The study indicates that leadership transitions will happen at a wider scale. **65% of the respondent Executive Directors (EDs) are planning to leave in the next five years.** While the retirement of many Baby Boomer EDs (51 years old and above) partly explains this, data show that this is not the only reason. 55% of the younger generation EDs are also planning to leave in the next

five years. The other key reasons that could make them leave include health concerns, issues with the board/principals, better opportunities outside, and family and personal considerations.

Of the NGOs with EDs planning to leave in one to five years, about 45% have no ready successor within their current ranks. While not a majority, this proportion is not insignificant. Overall, the appetite and preparedness of respondent NGO staff (considered to be part of the pool of next generation NGO leaders) to become ED in the next one to five years seems low at 34%, considering 94% met the minimum educational attainment and work experience for an aspiring ED. Majority of the respondent staff (57%) are only planning to stay for another five years. Better opportunities and remuneration issues are among the most cited reasons for those who already left and those who are planning to leave. In addition, **55% of the respondent NGOs have no existing transition plan** mainly because they don't feel it is a priority. For NGOs with EDs planning to leave in the next five years, the proportion is even slightly higher.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There also appears to be an increasing expectation for EDs to meet present and future needs, creating the pressure to develop and prepare future leaders who are not only highly competent, but are also strongly inspired and motivated by the passion to serve others through NGO work. This means that for the current EDs who are passionate enough to stay, they are expected to continue enhancing not only their own capacities but also that of their staff, who are their immediate pool of future leaders. Among the crucial capacity building needs for present and potential leaders are risk management, financial planning and management (including fundraising and resource generation), board management, strategic thinking, and human resource planning and management (including mentoring).

Taking all of this together, while the ED positions may look attractive enough, with 50% of the current EDs taking over less than three months after their predecessors' departures, **there are some doubts about the ability of the sector to continue attracting a sufficient quantity and quality of ED successors**

in the future.

The bright side is that **majority of NGO workers (EDs and NGO staff alike) are highly motivated by non-monetary/psychic benefits when applying and staying in the sector, although there is recognition that remuneration remains fundamental** and should afford the employee a decent living. The main non-monetary benefits are commitment to serve, nature of work, values/ priorities and reputation of the organization, and personal growth. These prove strong enough motivators. Despite the challenges in many of the NGOs, both EDs and staff stay in their current positions for eight years on average. **Many NGOs currently have remuneration and benefit packages that already feature non-monetary practices, which appear to be increasingly appealing.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Examples of these are flexibility of work arrangements and rest and recreation, which offer the needed respite and time to attend to personal obligations. These are important for workers to cope with the demands both at home and at work. The desire to enhance the remuneration and benefits package to be more attractive can already be built on these strengths.

Knowing what we know now through the study,

business as usual does not seem to be an option if the NGOs want to be strategic and proactive in dealing with leadership transition challenges.

Efforts to mitigate the risks of such leadership transitions and to maximize the opportunities they bring must be initiated now.



BACKGROUND

The Association of Foundations (AF), with support from Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF), conducted this study to better understand the challenges faced by Philippine NGOs in transitioning from existing to future leadership at the Executive Director (ED) level, or its equivalent. This study will inform the design of a support package for the NGO sector in dealing with leadership transition, which is framed mainly as issues related to attracting, keeping, and upskilling the pool of NGO talents, as well as identifying future NGO leaders.

This document presents the main results of:

1. Three surveys

a) EDs: The survey instrument for the EDs was sent out to around 600 NGOs¹ in the databases of AF, Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) and Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC). 115 EDs responded, corresponding to 115 NGOs. This composition met the target ratio of NGO types and geographical locations.

b) NGO staff: The 115 ED respondents were requested to provide names of at least two staff who are

considered as either second-liners, part of the senior management team, program/project officers or technical staff. 118 NGO staff from 62 (of 115) NGOs responded.

c) Students: 58 (27 female, 31 male) select third year and graduating students of De La Salle University, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, and University of the Philippines-Diliman were part of the survey² and the complementing FGDs. The students have taken up a combination of social development-related and non-social development-related courses.

The NGOs, ED and staff respondent profiles are summarized in Annex A. Notwithstanding the limited number of ED and staff respondents, AF in consultation with a select group of experienced development and NGO workers, is reasonably comfortable in considering the set of ED and NGO respondents as a microcosm of the broader NGO sector.

2. Focused group discussions³ (FGDs) with EDs in Metro Manila, Luzon, and Mindanao; former EDs; and staff in Metro Manila and Mindanao.



BACKGROUND

In addition to the surveys and FGDs, AF also interviewed three (3) Human Resource and Organizational Development (HR/OD) specialists⁴ and two (2) research specialists.⁵ The former was intended to generate ideas on possible ways to address the issue from an HR/OD perspective.

Footnotes:

¹ NGOs refer to the intermediate agencies and institutions that tend to operate with a full-time staff complement and provide a wide-range of services to the primary organizations, communities and individuals based on Aldaba, 1993; Silliman and Noble, 1998 as cited in “Civil Society Organization in the Philippines, A Mapping and Strategic Assessment” in 2011. This excludes cooperatives, people’s organization and social enterprises. These NGOs must also be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

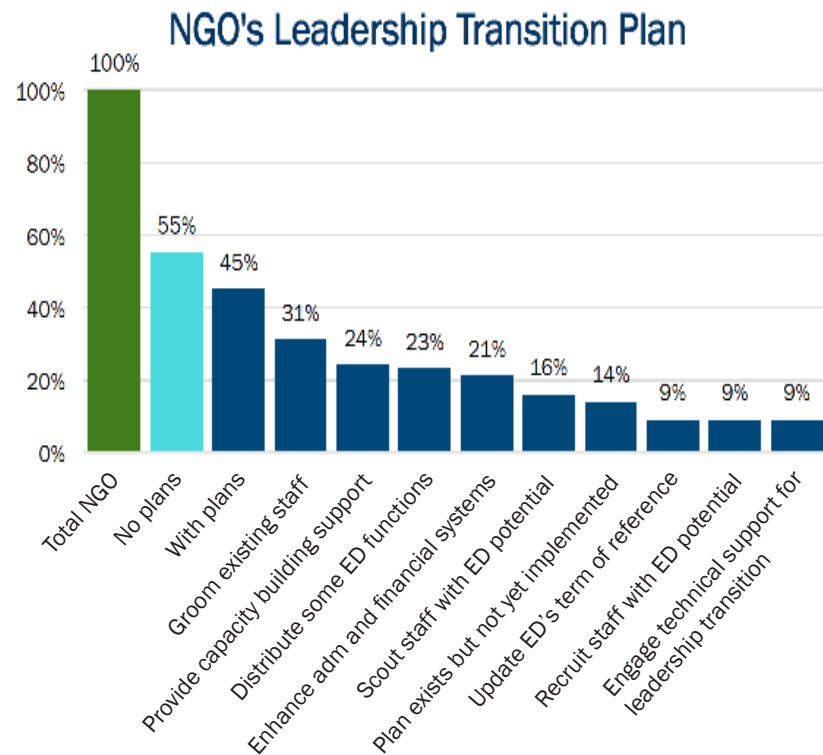
² AF engaged with YGOAL Inc. for the student survey and FGDs. YGOAL has been closely working with the youth.

³ Because of resource constraints, the FGDs were originally limited to Metro Manila. In the course of the study, opportunities came up that allowed AF to expand the FGDs to Luzon and Mindanao.

⁴ Ms. Tes dela Paz, Director for Corporate Human Resources–Talent Development of the Jollibee Foods Corporation; Mr. Edwin Ebreo, HR/OD Consultant of Consuelo Foundation; and Ms. Milalin Javellana, Facility Director of the Philippines Australia Human Resource and Organisational Development Facility.

⁵ Ms. Kathyrine Robles, Vice President, Quantitative Data Analysis of Institutional Shareholder Services; and Prof. Philip Arnold Tuano, Ateneo de Manila University.

PLANNING FOR A LEADERSHIP TRANSITION



Almost all (98%) of the respondent Executive Directors (EDs) see the need for a leadership transition plan in case of an emergency or planned departure.

However, majority (55%) of the respondent NGOs have no existing plans. The most common reason given for the absence of a plan was the unfelt need or priority of the organization to develop one. The board should provide the policy cover, which the ED could implement with the board's continued support.

However, majority (55%) of the respondent NGOs have no existing plans. The most common reason given for the absence of a plan was the unfelt need or priority of the organization to develop one.

The 45% of NGOs with existing plans reported to be doing the following:

- a) Groom existing staff
- b) Provide capacity building support
- c) Distribute select ED functions to key staff
- d) Enhance administrative and financial systems
- e) Scout for staff with potential to become ED
- f) Has existing plan but yet to implement
- g) Update the ED's terms of reference
- h) Recruit staff with potential to become ED
- i) Engage technical support for leadership transition

In general, as the organization size increases, the likelihood of having a leadership transition plan also increases. Plans are available to 50% of the medium-sized NGOs (11-15 staff), 55% of the large NGOs (26-50 staff) and 70% of the very large NGOs (>50 staff). Similarly, the set of activities being done by organizations with leadership transition plans also expands as the size of the organization increases.

ATTRACTIVENESS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

50% of the NGOs found someone to replace their former EDs in less than three months.

Search Period	Quantity	Percentage
Less Than 3 Months	57	50%
3-6 Months	18	16%
7-12 Months	20	17%
More Than 12 Months	20	17%
Grand Total	115	100%

50% of the NGOs found someone to replace their former EDs in less than three months.

Most of the EDs came from the NGO sector (33% from the same organization and 23% from another local NGO). The EDs came from the following sectors before becoming an ED. (The succeeding list excludes the 27 EDs who were the first ever EDs of their organizations.)

ED's Previous Sector	Quantity	Percentage
Same Organization	29	33%
Another Local NGO	20	23%
Private/Business Sector	17	19%
Academe	7	8%
International NGO	6	7%
Others	4	5%
Development Agency	3	3%
Government	1	2%
Social Enterprise	1	1%
Grand Total	88	100%

The family foundations, network/coalitions and service delivery NGOs source their EDs primarily within their own organizations, while the corporate foundations get most of their EDs from the private/business sector.

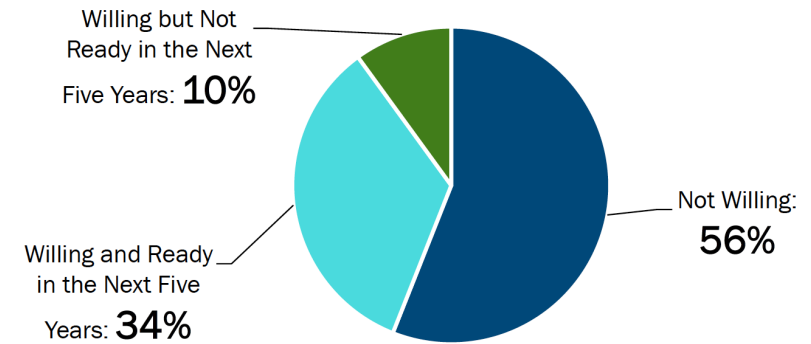
Most of the EDs came from the NGO sector

The top considerations of the current EDs for applying for and accepting the position are shown in the table below.

Reasons for Applying and Accepting the ED Position	Quantity	Percentage
Opportunity to Make a Difference in Society	95	83%
Nature of Work and Responsibilities	80	70%
Priorities and Values of the Organization	79	69%
Personal Growth	66	57%
Reputation of the Organization	57	50%
Person/Board Who Hired	40	35%
Flexibility of Work Arrangements	33	29%
Overall Remuneration Package	13	11%
Family Priorities or Inputs	12	10%
Specific Circumstances (e.g., Member of a Family With a Foundation)	9	8%
Opportunities for Promotion Within the Organization	7	6%

Of the total NGO staff respondents, only 34% are willing and prepared to become NGO EDs in the next five years.

Staff Interest and Readiness to Become Executive Director



Meanwhile, only 56% of the respondent NGO staff (considered to be among the pool of next generation NGO leaders) are willing to become ED even if 94% of them meet the minimum educational attainment (college degree) and work experience (five years) expected by the current EDs of their successors. Of the total NGO staff respondents only 34% are willing and prepared to become NGO EDs in the next five years. This is the proportion of NGO staff with the appetite and confidence to take on the ED position in the next five years.

45% of the NGOs with EDs planning to leave in the next five years have no ready successor among their current staff.

To demonstrate what the NGO staff’s level of appetite and preparedness in the next five years may mean in terms of potential gap—should the EDs who are planning to leave in the same period push through—we looked at the 62 NGOs (of the 115) with both ED and NGO staff respondents. Of the 62 NGOs, 38 (61%) of them have EDs planning to leave in the next five years. 21 (55%) of these NGOs have at least one staff willing and ready to replace their EDs should they leave in the next five years. The remaining 17 (45%) have no ready successor among their current staff to replace the EDs who are planning to leave in the next five years.

Many of the EDs in the course of the focus group discussions (FGDs) have articulated their desire to get their successors from within their organizations. However, they are also aware that many of their staff are increasingly seeing government as an attractive option. Regardless of whether the potential leader will stay or leave, many of the current EDs find it critical to (i) inspire and build the value of service among the staff so that they will find greater fulfillment from serving others over getting a financially-attractive opportunity, (ii) mentor and engage them, and (iii) give them the space to contribute. The desire is to retain them, if not groom them, to become the next ED.

The following table shows the top reasons of those who are open to become an ED, regardless of how soon they feel ready to take on the position.

Top Reasons for Willingness to Become ED	Quantity	Percentage
Opportunity to Lead the Organization	52	44%
Personal Growth	47	40%
Career Development	41	35%
More Interesting and Challenging Nature of Work	30	25%

The table below contains the top reasons of those who are not keen to become ED.

Top Reasons for Unwillingness to Become E	Quantity	Percentage
Mismatched Interest and Skill Set	34	29%
Insufficient Competencies	30	25%
Lack of Confidence to Meet Expectations	21	18%
Implications on Personal/Family Priorities	16	14%
Too Many Responsibilities and Accountability	14	12%

ATTRACTIVENESS

NGO STAFF

The NGO staff's key considerations for applying and accepting are very similar to that of the ED's.

Reasons for Applying and Accepting an NGO Position	Quantity	Percentage
Opportunity to Make a Difference	98	83%
Priorities and Values of the Organization	88	75%
Nature of Work and Responsibilities	86	73%
Personal Growth	72	61%
Reputation of the Organization	69	58%
Flexibility of Work Arrangements	43	36%
Person/Board Who Hired	27	23%
Overall Remuneration Package	22	19%
Family Priorities or Inputs	13	11%
Opportunities for Promotion Within the Organization	12	10%

While considerations for applying feature non-monetary factors, majority of the NGO staff, when probed during the FGD, admitted that remuneration is a very important consideration when making job-related decisions. The minimum level should be sufficient enough to provide the person a decent living, which the EDs also affirmed.

Most of the NGO staff reported to have come from NGOs (34%) and the private/business (33%) sector immediately prior to their current positions.

While considerations for applying feature non-monetary factors, majority of the NGO staff, when probed during the FGD, admitted that remuneration is a very important consideration when making job-related decisions.

Most of the NGO staff reported to have come from NGOs (34%) and the private/business (33%) sector.

Previous Sector	Quantity	Percentage
Private/Business Sector	39	33%
Another Local NGO	22	19%
Same Organization	18	15%
Government	15	13%
International NGO	10	8%
Academe	6	5%
Others	3	3%
Development Agency	2	2%
Social Enterprise	1	1%
Not Applicable (i.e.First Job)	2	2%
Grand Total	88	100%

While there is a sense from the NGO staff in the FGD that Millennials are increasingly interested in joining the NGO sector because of improved general knowledge of development challenges, exposure to NGO work, easier application process in NGOs, and the sense of fulfilling a purpose, a survey among 58 students suggests a **low interest among Millennials to join and pursue a career in the NGO sector relative to other sectors**. A little over 50% of the students indicated familiarity with the NGO sector, and only about 15% have thought of joining and working in the NGO sector with

a longer-term perspective. Together with development agencies, the NGO sector got the lowest number of respondents among the options of sectors. Since this may be expected given that the NGO sector is not among the “major employers,” the trend of students’ interest to be part of the NGO sector across time may be a more relevant means of assessing the appetite of the Millennials. However, in the absence of publicly available historical data on students’ appetite to join the NGO sector, **this study could not ascertain whether the rate of interest has gone up or down over time.**

Personal growth and nature of work were key considerations by at least 80% of the students in looking for their first job. At least 50% of them also consider opportunities to make a difference in society, travel opportunities and relation to their educational background. Further, this same set of considerations were their top answers when asked what could make them stay in a job except that relation to educational background is now replaced with flexibility of work arrangements.

While the overall remuneration package did not figure prominently as a consideration in the student survey, the

FGDs brought out that **the perception of low salary in NGOs is a hindering factor in why students are not inclined to join the sector.**

RETENTION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

65% of the EDs are planning to move out of their current position in the next five years.

EDs' Likely Additional Years of Stay in Current NGO	Quantity	Percentage
1-2 Years	21	18%
3-5 Years	54	47%
6-10 Years	18	16%
Beyond 10 Years	22	19%
Grand Total	115	100%

Although, on the average, the existing EDs have been in their positions for eight years, at least 58% of them are planning to leave in the next five years regardless of the length of stay or age ranges. This also holds true for NGOs of various asset or organizational sizes, except when the NGO is small-sized (6-10 staff) with an asset size of over Php100 million.

Length of Stay as ED	Total Quantity	Planning to Leave in 1-5 Years	Percentage
Very Short (up to 1 Year)	19	11	58%
Short (>1 to 5 Years)	34	23	68%
Medium (>5 to 10 Years)	23	14	61%
Long (>10 to 20 Years)	26	16	62%
Very Long (>20 Years)	11	9	82%
Grand Total	113	73	

Based on where the previous EDs were reported to have moved, the top receiving sector of the previous EDs are the private/business sector, government, other local NGOs, and international NGOs. The high percentage of previous EDs who went into retirement is also notable.

RETENTION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Where Previous NGO EDs Moved	Quantity	Percentage
Retirement	18	20%
Private/Business Sector	13	14%
Another Local NGO	12	13%
Government	12	13%
International NGO	10	11%
Academe	7	8%
Abroad	5	6%
Same Organization	5	6%
Further Studies	4	4%
Others	3	3%
Development Agency	1	1%

The succeeding tables contain the top considerations that make the current EDs stay and will make them leave.

Reasons for Staying as ED	Quantity	Percentage
Supportive Environment (e.g., Good Relationship With and Support From Board/Staff)	43	37%
Trust in the Organization (e.g., Belief in the Mission, Values and Priorities)	43	37%
Commitment to Make a Difference in Society	37	32%
Unfinished Business	36	31%
Fulfillment From Work	34	30%
Absence of a Successor	21	18%
Remuneration	15	13%
Personal Growth	14	12%
Family and Personal Considerations	7	6%

RETENTION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Reasons That Will Make EDs Leave	Quantity	Percentage
Retirement	34	30%
Health Concerns	31	27%
Issues With the Board/Principals	31	27%
Better Opportunities Outside	30	26%
Family and Personal Considerations	25	22%
Remuneration Concerns	15	13%
Misaligned Organizational Mission, Values and Priorities	15	13%
Presence of a Successor	12	10%
Performance Issues	10	9%
Changes in Work Requirements	10	9%
Loss of Motivation/Passion	7	6%
Inaccessibility of Office	6	5%
Lack of Growth	5	4%
Further Studies	3	3%
Re-Assignment	3	3%

The current EDs' top reasons for staying strongly link to their key motivations for applying. In addition, some **other factors came into play, particularly relationships with the board/principals and staff and the sense of responsibility to finish tasks**, which only became significant once the ED joined the organization.

Internal relationships (with the board and staff) matter to most of the EDs when considering to stay and to leave. Issues with the board/principals as a key consideration for leaving was articulated by EDs. Similarly, a supportive environment is also among the top reasons for staying.

Retirement, which is leading the list of reasons that could make them leave, looks consistent with the age profile of the current EDs, who are mostly 51 years and older. Health is another major reason to leave their job.

Excluding retirement, death and illness, **better opportunities elsewhere is the single major reason cited for the previous EDs' departure.**

RETENTION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Excluding retirement, death and illness, better opportunities elsewhere is the single major reason cited for the previous EDs' departure.

Those who cited better opportunities as a major reason for leaving found better opportunities primarily in government and international NGOs.

Remuneration is a more prominent motivation for both staying and leaving for EDs who are planning to leave in the next two years. This group, comprising 18% of the ED respondents, is much less concerned about health issues and their relationship with the board/principals.

The younger EDs also put more weight on remuneration as a motivation for both staying and leaving. In addition, personal growth remains a relevant consideration for staying for EDs 40 years old and below while less important for EDs 41 years and above.

Relative to the considerations of other EDs, those who are planning to stay for only up to five years put more weight on the absence of a successor as a reason for staying.

Compared to the female EDs, male EDs give more value to remuneration in their decision to stay and to leave. Only 8% of female EDs mentioned remuneration as a key consideration compared to 21% of the male EDs. In terms of retention, many of the FGD participants indicated the important role of benefits (other than the salary and mandatory benefits) in keeping them in their current jobs. The following are additional benefits as listed by the EDs:

RETENTION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The following are additional benefits as listed by the EDs:

- a) Rest and recreation (72%)
- b) Health Maintenance Organization (67%)
- c) Ad hoc staff training (only when opportunities arise) (66%)
- d) Mentoring (63%)
- e) Flexible work schedule (63%)
- f) Opportunities for promotion (60%)
- g) Travel opportunities (59%)
- h) Regular staff training (planned and budgeted) (55%)
- i) Health and wellness program (30%)
- j) Scholarship/fellowship (23%)
- k) Incentives (e.g. performance incentives) (6%)
- l) Insurance (e.g. health, accident) (5%)
- m) Non-HMO health benefits (5%)
- n) Financial assistance/loan (3%)
- o) Allowances/de minimis (3%)
- p) Breastfeeding facilities (3%)
- q) Day care facilities (2%)

The list features non-monetary benefits at the top. For instance, rest and recreation, and flexible work schedule are among those that afford the staff the time-out to re-energize and take care of other pressing matters. These are important for workers to cope with demands both at home and at work. Mentoring and training feed into a person's personal growth, which came out as a key consideration in career decisions especially for most of the staff and students. Students are also putting premium on travel opportunities in choosing a job and even in staying.

Compared to the list generated from the EDs' responses, "opportunities for promotion" was not listed as an additional benefit by many of the NGO staff. EDs and the staff may have a divergent appreciation of opportunities for promotion in the organization. **Data shows limited opportunity for promotion in the NGO sector.** Only about 30% of the NGO EDs came from the same organization. In addition, majority (55%) of the respondent NGOs do not have a leadership transition plan that is meant to help guide them in developing their pool of human resources as well as choosing their successor ED.

RETENTION NGO STAFF

Just like the EDs, majority of the NGO staff are only likely to stay until 2022.

NGO Staff's Likely Additional Years of Stay in the Current NGO	Quantity	Percentage
1-2 Years	25	21%
3-5 Years	43	36%
6-10 Years	32	27%
Beyond 10 Years	18	15%
Grand Total	115	100%

The average length of stay of the NGO staff is about eight years. This is supported by almost 60% of EDs who reported an average staff turnover of more than four years in their organization. However, at least 50% of the NGO staff, regardless of the length of stay and age range, are now planning to leave. The exception to this are those who are 51-60 years old and those who have stayed in the organization for more than 20 years.

When asked which sector they are likely to join if they leave their current job, **the most attractive sectors appear to be international NGOs and the private/business sector.**

Attractive Sectors for NGO Staff	Quantity	Percentage
International NGO	27	23%
Private/Business Sector	26	22%
Government	14	12%
Another Local NGO	13	11%
Retirement	12	10%
Development Agency	11	9%
Social Enterprise	7	6%
Others	6	5%
Academe	2	2%
Grand Total	118	100%

RETENTION NGO STAFF

The following tables show the NGO staff’s top reasons that make them stay and will make them leave.

Reasons for Staying as Staff in Current NGO	Quantity	Percentage
Opportunity to Make a Difference	72	61%
Nature of Work and Responsibilities	72	61%
Priorities and Values of the Organization	69	58%
Personal Growth	59	50%
Reputation of the Organization	57	48%
Relationship With Management and Supervisors	47	40%
Relationship With Peers	36	31%
Flexibility of Work Arrangements	34	29%
Overall Remuneration Package	34	29%
Office Location/Area of Assignment	30	25%
Job Security	22	19%
Family Priorities or Inputs	18	15%
Opportunities for Promotion Within the Organization	8	7%
Absence of Better Opportunities Elsewhere	4	3%

The key motivations of the NGO staff when applying and accepting their positions are the same motivations that keep them in their positions, but other factors weigh in when deciding to stay. These include (i) relationships with management and peers, and (ii) office location/area of assignment.

The reasons cited by EDs why their staff left (i.e., better opportunities outside the organization and remuneration concerns) are also among the main reasons mentioned by the NGO staff why they might consider leaving.

RETENTION NGO STAFF

Reasons That Will Make the Staff Leave Their Current NGO	Quantity	Percentage
Better Job Opportunities Elsewhere	68	58%
Health/Burnout	60	51%
Change of Career Plans	54	46%
Opportunity to Contribute More in Making a Difference in Society	48	41%
Retirement	47	40%
Insufficient Remuneration Package	43	36%
Poor Work-Life Balance	34	29%
Expectations From the Position Significantly Changed	33	28%
Tension With Management or Colleagues	32	27%
Limited Opportunity for Personal Development	28	24%
Inconsistencies of Personal/Family Priorities With Organizational Priorities and Policies	27	23%
Limited Opportunity for Career Development	27	23%
Office Location/Area of Assignment	26	22%
Others	6	5%

The key motivations of the NGO staff when applying and accepting their positions are the same motivations that keep them in their positions, but other factors weigh in when deciding to stay.

Like the EDs, health-related issues are major considerations for the staff to stop working.

Remuneration package appears to not be a key factor that will make the NGO staff stay but something that will make them decide to leave.

UPSKILLING

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The table below shows the degree of attention currently given by EDs to their key functions as well as the degree of difficulty in performing these functions.

During the FGDs, many of the current EDs emphasized strategic thinking, resource mobilization, board management, building values to serve others, and mentoring and engaging the staff (especially the Millennials, to at least keep their interest if not inspire them to aspire for an ED position someday) as crucial elements that EDs should possess to minimize leadership transition issues. Mentoring is even more important when the organization is resource-constrained to provide formal training to its staff.

Many of the EDs admitted that personal relationships (e.g., handpicked by the board) led them to becoming the EDs. But they now see the increasing need for HR not only in recruitment but also in staff development.

Given the EDs' very challenging tasks, it is necessary for the EDs to take care of their well-being to sustain them in what they have been doing.

EDs' Key Functions	Degree of Attention	Degree of Difficulty
Leadership	High	Medium
Strategic Thinking	High	Medium
Operational Planning, Supervision and Management	High	Medium
Program Planning, Supervision and Management	High	Medium
Representation	Medium	Low to Medium
Financial Planning and Management	Medium	Medium to High
Human Resource Planning and Management	Low	Medium
Risk Management	Low	Medium to High
Board Management	"Mixed"*	Medium

* Almost equal number of EDs are giving different degree of attention to board management.

Strategic thinking, resource mobilization, board management, building values to serve others, and mentoring and engaging the staff (especially the Millennials, to at least keep their interest if not inspire them to aspire for an ED position someday) as crucial elements that EDs should possess to minimize leadership transition issues.

U P S K I L L I N G N G O S T A F F

When the NGO staff who are open to become ED were asked to indicate their degree of preparedness to perform ED functions, **at least 50% of the NGO staff indicated the following as areas they are less prepared to perform:**

- a) Risk management
- b) Financial planning and management (including fundraising activities)
- c) Board management
- d) Strategic thinking
- e) Human resource planning and management

During the FGDs with the EDs, there appears to be a consensus that values (particularly passion to serve) should come first over technical competencies for the successor EDs. These values will guide a person in how to use his/her competencies.

While specific requirements for a potential ED are hinged on the specific context of the NGO, most (at least 50%) of the EDs want their successor to possess the following minimum qualifications:

a) **Values/passion to serve**

b) **College degree (no specific course)**

c) **At least five years** of relevant experience: NGO experience is a must. This may need to be combined with technical experience (e.g., sectoral experience) depending on the nature of NGO work.

d) **Skills**

i. Leadership (45%)

ii. Communication skills (35%)

iii. Management/supervisory (34%)

During the FGDs, the EDs unanimously agreed that passion to serve is a more important qualification than technical skills for their successors.



FUTURE OPERATING CONTEXT

Shrinking and limited funding 10 years from now remains a top concern of many EDs. A number of the EDs look at **social enterprise** as a strategy to deal with financial limitations.

On top of continuous funding constraints, organizations are increasingly **pressured to address various organizational challenges** especially in the following aspects:

a) Human resources: The issue of declining interest, quantity and quality of human resources in the NGO sector is shared by many EDs. This also extends to leadership succession. In the context of human resource development and management, many of the EDs also raised the desire to beef up the remuneration package for the NGO staff.

b) Internal governance: EDs also articulated the requirement to maintain the NGOs' compliance with laws/regulations. Furthermore, they mentioned the need to address board governance (e.g., lack of understanding of the roles of the board).

c) Results/impact: There is also the increasing demand to demonstrate results/impacts of NGOs' contributions to development work.

d) Information technology: The NGO sector is yet to maximize the advantages of IT in the conduct of its business/operations.

Beyond the organizational level, the NGOs need to **reckon with the increasingly complex political, social and environmental issues.**

Innovation and collaboration are seen as critical elements for NGOs to adapt to this future context.

ANNEXES



Type: This categorizes the respondent NGOs based mostly on the definition of NGO types in AF’s publication “Philippine NGOs: A Resource Book of Social Development NGOs.” The composition of respondent NGOs attempts to approximate the composition of the broader NGO sector.

NGO Type	Quantity	Percentage
Academe-based	5	4%
Community Foundation	6	5%
Corporate Foundation	28	24%
Faith-based	6	5%
Family Foundation	4	5%
Funding Mechanism	6	5%
Network/Coalition	11	10%
Service Delivery NGO	47	41%
Grand Total	115	100%

Geographical location: This refers to the registered address of the organization’s main office. The responses were collected from NGOs across the country. More than 50% of the respondents have established their main offices in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Geographical Location	Quantity	Percentage
Luzon	15	13%
Visayas	16	14%
Mindanao	17	15%
NCR	67	58%
Grand Total	115	100%

Asset size: This groups respondent NGOs according to their asset sizes. Medium range (28%) and very small (21%) got the most number of respondents.

Asset Size	Quantity	Percentage
(1) Micro (Php 1m below)	8	7%
(2) Very Small (Php >1m to 5m)	24	21%
(3) Small (Php >5m to 10m)	10	9%
(4) Medium (Php >10m to 50m)	32	28%
(5) Large (Php >50m to 100m)	15	13%
(6) Very Large (Php>100m to 500m)	14	12%
(7) Extremely Large (Php >500m)	11	10%
Grand Total	115	100%

Organizational size: This clusters the respondent NGOs according to the number of their full-time and paid staff (other than the ED). Majority (62%) of the respondent NGOs have 1 to 10 staff. The few organizations with no full-time staff possibly support their operations through staff who are seconded or detailed from their affiliated corporations as reported by one organization falling under this category, or through volunteers.

Organizational Size	Quantity	Percentage
(1) No Full-Time Regular Staff	5	4%
(2) Micro (1-5 staff)	38	33%
(3) Small (6 to 10 staff)	29	25%
(4) Medium (11 to 25 staff)	22	19%
(5) Large (26-50 staff)	11	10%
(6) Very Large (>50 staff)	10	9%
Grand Total	115	100%

Organizational age: This classifies the organizations according to ages based on their year of registration. 77% of the NGO respondents are between 10 and 45 years old. 15% of them are more than 45 years old, and only 12% in the young ranges.

Organizational Age	Quantity	Percentage
(1) Very Young (5 yrs and below)	5	4%
(2) Young (>5-10 yrs)	9	8%
(3) Middle-Aged (>10-25 yrs)	46	40%
(4) Old (>25-45 yrs)	38	33%
(5) Very Old (>45 yrs)	17	15%
Grand Total	115	100%

Geographical reach: This pertains to the coverage of organizations' operations. More than half of the respondents of any type have a nationwide coverage, except for community foundations that give focus to local/community level. Related to this, most of those with a nationwide coverage are based in NCR while those operating at the city to regional levels are mostly located in the three main islands. Meanwhile, geographical reach is not always a function of asset

and organizational sizes. Some NGOs that are small in terms of organizational size or asset size operate at the national level as much as the larger organizations.

Geographical Reach	Quantity	Percentage
(1) City/Municipal	11	10%
(2) Provincial	15	13%
(3) Regional	27	23%
(4) National	62	54%
Grand Total	115	100%

Nature: This distinguishes NGOs whether they are funding, implementing or both. Only a small percentage (5%) is strictly funding. The rest is a split of either strictly operating/implementing or both funding and operating.

Nature	Quantity	Percentage
Both Funding and Operating	54	47%
Strictly Funding	6	5%
Strictly Operating/ Implementing	55	48%
Grand Total	115	100%

Type and geographical location: Respondents from NCR came from all types of NGOs including funding mechanisms, which are all based in NCR. However, only select NGO types were collected for the rest of the island groups.

Type	Geographical Location				
	National Capital Region	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Grand Total
Academe-based	3			2	5
Community Foundation	2	3		1	6
Corporate Foundation	20		4	4	28
Faith-based	2	1		3	6
Family Foundation	5		1		6
Funding Mechanism	6				6
Network/Coalition	5	1	3	2	11
Service Delivery NGO	24	10	8	5	47
Grand Total	67	15	16	17	115

Type and geographical location: Respondents from NCR came from all types of NGOs including funding mechanisms, which are all based in NCR. However, only select NGO types were collected for the rest of the island groups.

Type and asset size: Almost all of the funding mechanisms have assets greater than Php100 million. At the opposite end are community foundations, which reported assets ranging from Php10 million or less.

Type	Asset Size							Grand Total
	(1) Micro	(2) Very Small	(3) Small	(4) Medium	(5) Large	(6) Very Large	(7) Extremely Large	
	(1m below)	(>1m- 5m)	(>5m- 10m)	(>10 -50m)	(>50 -100m)	(>100-500m)	(>500m)	
Academe-based				1	1	1	2	5
Community Foundation	1	3	2					6
Corporate Foundation		4	3	10	4	5	2	28
Faith-based		3		1	1	1		6
Family Foundation		2		1		1	2	6
Funding Mechanism			1			1	4	6
Network/Coalition	1	3		4	1	1	1	11
Service Delivery NGO	6	9	4	15	8	4	1	47
Grand Total	8	24	10	32	15	14	12	115

Type and organizational size: More than 50% of the respondents reported having no more than 10 full-time and paid staff. The absence of full-time staff is present in corporate and family foundations.

Type	Organizational Size						Grand Total
	No Full-Time Staff	Micro (1-5 staff)	Small (6 to 10 staff)	Medium (11 to 25 staff)	Large (26-50 staff)	V. Large (>50 staff)	
Academe-based		1	2	1	1		5
Community Foundation		6					6
Corporate Foundation	3	9	9	4	1	2	28
Faith-based			2	2	1	1	6
Family Foundation	2	1	1	1		1	6
Funding Mechanism		1	1	3	1		6
Network/Coalition		8	2			1	11
Service Delivery NGO		12	12	11	7	5	47
Grand Total	5	38	29	22	11	10	115

The total number of respondent EDs corresponds to the number of NGOs, at 115.

Sex: In general, there are more women EDs than men regardless of NGO type, geographical location, organization age, asset size and staff size. However, all funding mechanisms have male EDs. When organizations are extremely large, male EDs are 50% more than female EDs.

Sex	Quantity	Percentage
Female	73	63%
Male	42	37%
Grand Total	115	100%

Age range: Half of the respondent EDs are 51 years old and above. Family foundations have the most number of EDs who are 61 years old and above, followed by community foundations and service delivery NGOs.

Age Range ¹	Quantity	Percentage
30 Years Old and Below (Approx Millennial)	3	3%
31-40 Years Old (Approx Xennial) ²	16	14%
41-50 Years Old (Approx GenerationX)	35	30%
51-60 Years Old (Approx Baby Boomer)	42	37%
61 Years Old and Above (Baby Boomer)	19	17%
Grand Total	115	100%

The Millennial and Xennial EDs are not present in organizations with very large and extremely large asset sizes. Half of them are in NGOs with micro to small asset sizes, and the other half in medium to large asset sizes. Most of these NGOs are middle-aged or younger with 10 staff or less.

Civil status: Majority of the EDs are married.

Civil Status	Quantity	Percentage
Married	66	57%
Separated	4	3%
Single	41	36%
Widowed	3	3%
Undisclosed	1	1%
Grand Total	115	100%

Qualifications: More than 50% of EDs possess postgraduate degrees (masters or PhDs) and most of them have been in the NGO sector for more than 10 years.

Footnotes:

¹ Bump, P. (2014, March 25). Here Is When Each Generation Begins and Ends, According to Facts. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2014/03/here-is-when-each-generation-begins-and-ends-according-to-facts/359589/>

² Stollen, M. and Wolf, G. (2017, November 8). Between Generation X and the Millennials: There is a term for people born in the early 80s. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/how-old-are-millennials-when-born-generation-x-80s-called-child-of-nineties-a8043806.html>

Years as ED: A little less than half of the respondent EDs are fairly new in their positions (less than five years). 36% of the fairly new EDs are also at least 51 years old.

Years as ED in Current NGO	Quantity	Percentage
(1) V. Short (up to 1 yr)	19	17%
(2) Short (>1 to 5 yrs)	34	30%
(3) Medium (>5 - 10 yrs)	23	20%
(4) Long (>10- 20 yrs)	26	23%
(5) V. Long (>20- 30 yrs)	11	10%
(Blank)	2	2%
Grand Total	115	100%

On the average, ED respondents have:

- a) 27 years of total work experience
- b) 19 years in the NGO sector
- c) 8 years as ED in current organizations

Previous Work: Most of the current cohort of EDs came from the NGO sector (33% from the same organization and 23% from another local NGO), when the first time EDs are excluded. 23% (27 EDs) of the total respondents are first time EDs in their respective organizations. Meanwhile, 70% of those who came from within the same organization see themselves staying only up to 5 years.

ED's Previous Sector	Quantity	Percentage
Academe	7	8%
Another Local NGO	20	23%
Development Agency	3	3%
Government	1	2%
International NGO	6	7%
Others	4	5%
Private/Business Sector	17	19%
Same Organization	29	33%
Social Enterprise	1	1%
Grand Total	88	100%

NGOs represented: There were 118 NGO staff respondents (43% occupying manager/senior officer positions, and 57% occupying program/project officer or equivalent positions) from 62 NGO organizations representing all types, organizational sizes, asset sizes, geographical locations, nature, organizational ages and levels of geographical reach. These NGOs were the subset of the 115 NGOs captured in the ED survey. The respondents include one staff who is seconded from the NGO's affiliated corporation.

Table 1. Types of NGOs Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Type	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Academe-based	2	3%	3	3%
Community Foundation	3	5%	3	3%
Corporate Foundation	16	26%	30	25%
Faith-based	3	5%	5	4%
Family Foundation	2	3%	3	3%
Funding Mechanism	4	6%	11	9%
Network/Coalition	6	10%	14	12%
Service Delivery NGO	26	42%	49	42%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Table 2. Organizational Size Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Organizational Size	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
(1) No Full-Time Regular Staff	1	2%	1	1%
(2) Micro (1-5)	17	27%	25	21%
(3) Small (6 to 10)	17	27%	35	30%
(4) Medium (11 to 15)	13	21%	27	23%
(5) Large (26-50)	8	13%	18	15%
(6) V. Large (>50)	6	10%	12	10%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Table 3. Asset Size of NGOs Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Asset Size	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
(1) Micro (Php 1m Below)	2	3%	3	3%
(2) Very Small (Php >1m to 5m)	11	18%	17	14%
(3) Small (Php >5m to 10m)	6	10%	10	8%
(4) Medium (Php >10m to 50m)	18	29%	35	30%
(5) Large (Php >50m to 100m)	9	15%	15	13%
(6) Very Large (Php>100m to 500m)	9	15%	21	18%
(7) Extremely Large (Php >500m)	7	11%	17	14%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Table 4. Geographical Location of NGOs Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Geographical Location	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Luzon	8	13%	15	13%
Visayas	9	15%	15	13%
Mindanao	8	13%	18	15%
NCR	37	60%	70	59%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Table 5. Nature of NGOs Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Nature	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Both Funding and Operating	30	48%	54	46%
Strictly Funding	3	5%	7	6%
Strictly Operating/ Implementing	29	47%	57	48%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Table 6. Organizational Age of NGOs Represented in the NGO Staff Survey

Organizational Age	NGOs Represented		NGO Staff	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
(1) V. Young (5 yrs and below)	3	5%	20	17%
(2) Young (>5-10 yrs)	6	10%	48	41%
(3) Middle-Aged (>10-25 yrs)	24	39%	34	29%
(4) Old (>25-45 yrs)	18	29%	6	5%
(5) V. Old (>45 yrs)	11	18%	10	8%
Grand Total	62	100%	118	100%

Employment Status: 82% of the respondents are regular staff (including one staff that is seconded from the main corporation). The rest (18%) are contractual or project-based.

Sex: At 75%, NGO staff respondents are predominantly female. 25% are male.

Age Range/Generation ³	Quantity	Percentage
30 Years Old and Below (Approx Millennial)	18	15%
31-40 Years Old (Approx Xennial) ⁴	43	36%
41-50 Years Old (Approx GenerationX)	36	31%
51-60 Years Old (Approx Baby Boomer)	19	16%
61 Years Old and Above (Baby Boomer)	2	2%
Grand Total	118	100%

Age range: NGO staff respondents are relatively young. The Millennials (roughly 30 years and below) and Xennials (roughly 31-40 years old) combined compose majority (51%) of the respondents.

Civil status: 55% are married while 39% are single. The rest are either widowed, separated or undisclosed.

Footnotes:

³ Bump, P. (2014, March 25). Here Is When Each Generation Begins and Ends, According to Facts. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2014/03/here-is-when-each-generation-begins-and-ends-according-to-facts/359589/>

⁴ Stollen, M. and Wolf, G. (2017, November 8). Between Generation X and the Millennials: There is a term for people born in the early 80s. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/how-old-are-millennials-when-born-generation-x-80s-called-child-of-nineties-a8043806.html>

Highest level of educational attainment: 81% are college graduates. The remaining 19% earned postgraduate degrees.

Work experience: On the average, NGO staff respondents have:

- a) 18 years of total work experience
- b) 12 years in the NGO sector
- c) 8 years in their current organizations

Majority came from private/business (33%) and NGO (34%) sectors. Only 20% found their first job in the NGO sector.

NGO Staff's Previous Sector	Quantity	Percentage
Private/Business Sector	39	33%
Another Local NGO	22	19%
Same Organization	19	16%
Government	15	13%
International NGO	10	8%
Academe	6	5%
Others	3	3%
Development Agency	2	2%
Social Enterprise	1	1%
Grand Total	118	100%

ADVISERS, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVIEWEES

ADVISERS

1. Carmencita Abella
2. Roberto Calingo
3. Ma. Socorro Camacho
4. Mario Deriquito
5. Cecile Dominguez-Yujuico
6. Sixto Donato Macasaet
7. Joel Pagsanghan
8. Andrew Parker
9. Felicitas Rixhon
10. Lydia Sarmiento-Enrile
11. Corazon Juliano-Soliman
12. Danilo Songco
13. Ma. Gisela Tiongson
14. Ma. Aurora Tolentino

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

1. Charice Abellana, Dana Foundation, Inc.
2. John Ronald Almonaña, Gerry Roxas Foundation, Inc.

3. Ma. Antonette Bacsain, Cartwheel Foundation, Inc.
4. Anthony Badilla, Pondo ng Pinoy Community Foundation, Inc.
5. Rosella Bahni, Igorota Foundation, Inc.
6. Maria L.V. Balmaceda, SGV Foundation, Inc.
7. Sr. Susan Bolanio, OND, OND Hesed Foundation, Inc.
8. Camille Buenaventura, San Miguel Foundation, Inc.
9. Dennis Matt Callo, Sarangani Province Empowerment and Community Transformation Forum, Inc.
10. Dolora Cardeño, ERDA Foundation, Inc.
11. Sr. Lydia Collado, RSCJ, Sacred Heart Institute for Transformative Education Foundation, Inc.
12. Amabel Conde, Malapatan Multi-Purpose Cooperative
13. Vivian Dabu, Kapampangan Manalakaran, Inc.
14. Sr. Digna Dacanay, St. Madeleine Sophie Foundation, Inc.
15. Jerome Daclison, Philippine Business for Social Progress
16. Rodolfo de la Torre, Jr., Sta. Cruz Multi-Purpose Cooperative
17. Maribeth de los Reyes, NORFIL Foundation, Inc.
18. Ramon Derige, Zuellig Family Foundation, Inc.
19. Mario Deriquito, BDO Foundation, Inc.

ADVISERS, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVIEWEES

20. Abdul Jatar Diahing, Sarangani Province Empowerment and Community Transformation Forum, Inc.
21. Jun Fructuoso Dingding, South Cotabato Foundation, Inc.
22. April Mae Domingo, Conrado and Ladislawa Alcantara Foundation, Inc.
23. Miriam Flores, Inocencio Magtoto Memorial Foundation, Inc.
24. Maria Fatima Garcia-Lorenzo, Kythe Foundation, Inc.
25. Mylene Lagman, Childhope Asia Philippines, Inc.
26. Dennis Librado, Tribal Leaders Development Foundation, Inc.
27. Ma. Rosario Lopez, Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation, Inc.
28. Melissa-Ann Macarubbo, LBC Hari ng Padala Foundation, Inc.
29. Martiniano Magdolot, Mahintana Foundation, Inc.
30. Clarita Magtoto, Inocencio Magtoto Memorial Foundation, Inc.
31. Richlie Lyndon Magtulis, Conrado and Ladislawa Alcantara Foundation, Inc.
32. Julius Ceasar Maniego, Kasilak Development Foundation, Inc.
33. Maribeth Marasigan, Aboitiz Foundation, Inc.
34. Chaco Molina, Fundación Santiago
35. Josephine Morta, OND Hesed Foundation, Inc.
36. Rodrigo Olarte, Jr., KPS Small Enterprise and Economic Development, Inc.
37. Marian Sanchez, Luke Foundation, Inc.
38. Lemia Simbulan, Andres Soriano Foundation, Inc.
39. Vivien Christi Trocio, Conrado and Ladislawa Alcantara Foundation, Inc.
40. Daniel Urquico, Child and Family Service Philippines, Inc.
41. Marla Urriza, Culion Foundation, Inc.
42. Ma. Pia Paz Uygongco, Uygongco Foundation, Inc.
43. Ryan Vidanes, RD Foundation, Inc.
44. Christine Wuthrich, LBC Hari ng Padala Foundation, Inc.


ADVISERS, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVIEWEES

HUMAN RESOURCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS

1. Tes dela Paz, Director for Corporate Human Resources - Talent Development, Jollibee Foods Corporation
2. Edwin Ebreo, Consultant, Consuelo Foundation
3. Milalin Javellana, Facility Director, Philippine Australia Human Resource and Organisational Development Facility

RESEARCH SPECIALISTS

1. Kathyrine Robles, Vice President, Quantitative Data Analysis of Institutional Shareholder Services
2. Philip Arnold Tuaño, Associate Chair, Ateneo de Manila University - Department of Economics



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Inquiries should be addressed to:
Association of Foundations Phils., Inc.
Room 1102, 11th Floor Aurora Tower
Aurora Boulevard, Cubao, Quezon City
PHILIPPINES
Telefax Nos. 63 (2) 911-9792, 913-7231
Website: www.afonline.org
Email: af@afonline.org