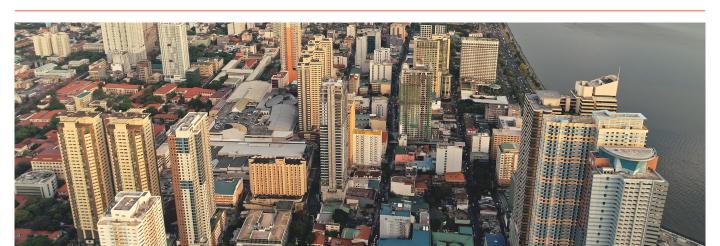








PHILIPPINE LANDSCAPE SCAN ON FEEDBACK PRACTICES OF IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS



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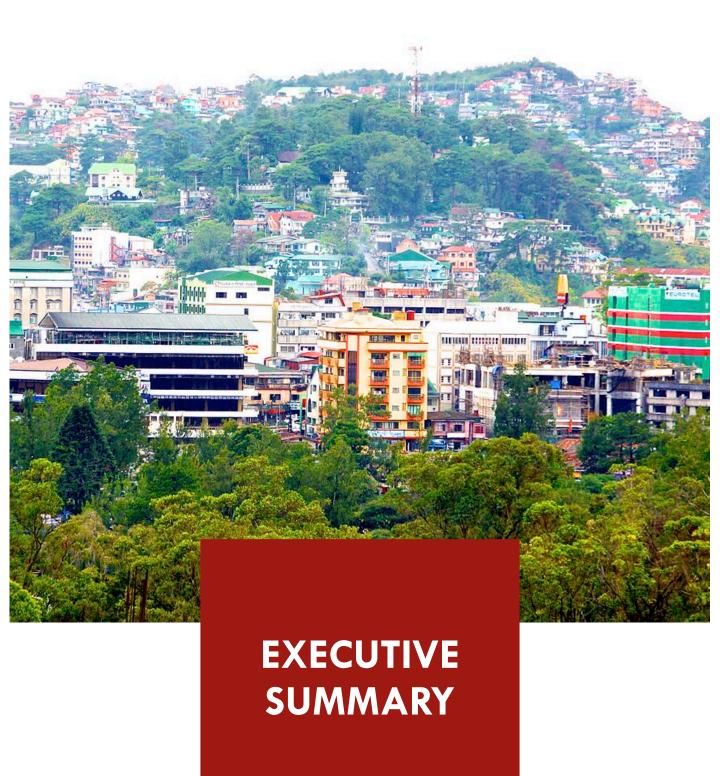
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACSI	Ayala Community for Social Impact Council		
AF	Association of Foundations		
AFI	Ayala Foundation, Inc.		
AVPN	N Asian Venture Philanthropy Network		
CDA	Cooperative Development Agency		
DILG	LG Department of Interior and Local Government		
FFSI	Fund for Shared Insight		
LGU	Local Government Unit		
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation		
MEL	IEL Monitoring, evaluation, and learning		
NGO	Non-government Organization		
NPO	NPO Non-profit Organization		
PCNC	PCNC Philippine Council for NGO Certification		
РО	People's Organization		
SEC	SEC Securities and Exchange Commission		
SPO	Social Purpose Organization		
TAF	The Asia Foundation		
ZFF	Zuellig Family Foundation		



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The landscape study on the Philippines aims to determine how feedback practices make impact organizations become more responsive to the needs, preferences, and opinions of the people and communities they help. With support from Fund for Shared Insight and leveraging Asian Venture Philanthropy Network's members, partners and collaborators in the Philippines, this study elicited the participation of 20 organizations in the impact ecosystem in the country.

The Philippines has a hybrid impact ecosystem. This landscape study categorizes them in three types: (i) funders that comprise family/corporate foundations and impact investors; (ii) intermediaries which include incubators and impact consultants; and (iii) social purpose organizations (SPOs) such as NGOs and social enterprises as direct-service providers.

Family and corporate foundations are hybrids, combining funding and implementation. Due to their extensive presence and partnerships all over the Philippines, foundations are close to the communities they serve which in turn give them better access to feedback to inform their projects. As a funder, they have the capacity to close the loop given their hybrid nature as both funder and implementer.

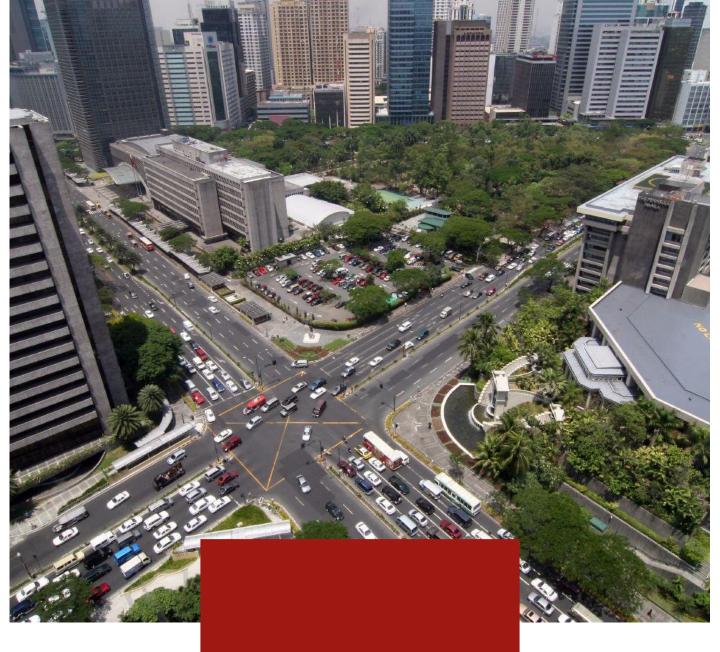
Impact investors and incubators identify social entrepreneurs as their main stakeholders, with whom they develop a mentor-mentee relationship. The feedback mechanisms are part of the learning programs they deliver instead of a separate M&E mechanism. Despite investing in social enterprises, among all the organizations interviewed, impact investors and incubators are the most detached from the least heard voices .

Closest to the communities served, social purpose organizations (SPOs) have established feedback practices, but how they do it and whether feedback informs the project implementation depends on their funders. Some NGOs have established monitoring and evaluation teams that track reporting needs and communication teams that "harvest" stories and anecdotes to give life to figures and performance indicators. Feedback received are integrated into both processes and are made available to donors and the larger public.

Face to face feedback has been limited during the pandemic. Technology has facilitated feedback between all three organization types and their beneficiaries, but it was only possible for those with access to technology. All organizations also noted the value of candid and informal conversations and that it was a way of getting feedback pre-pandemic. However, all organizations acknowledge the need to improve how informal feedback is processed, stored, analyzed and acted upon to be useful during program delivery.

Though everybody agrees feedback is needed, some smaller organizations have expressed constraints in devoting resources for systematic feedback outside the work of monitoring and evaluation. To accommodate improved feedback practices, they were keen to learn about mainstreaming it in their operations and processes without requiring additional staff. It was also suggested that organizational networks and associations could be a way to course capacity building activities on feedback practice.

Various awareness-raising and case-building activities must be undertaken within the ecosystem about models of listening practices so it can be adopted in the Philippines. The impact ecosystem in the Philippines already has existing feedback mechanisms and listening practices albeit in varying degrees of intensity and formality. Despite all organizations being keen to improve their operations, more information must be provided on how listening practices and feedback mechanisms can be improved. This could be achieved by localizing existing feedback tools and showcasing pilot cases.



ABOUT
THE STUDY

I. ABOUT THE STUDY



In the Philippines, non-profit organizations or what we call impact organizations can accept financial or technical assistance in the form of grants and donations to deliver social-purpose activities to their target beneficiaries or communities. Non-profit organizations are hybrids in terms of their functions and can broadly be categorized as (i) funders, (ii) intermediaries; and (iii) social purpose organizations or service providers. In general, the non-profit ecosystem can receive funding from government agencies, private financial institutions, international development partners, and corporate or family foundations and other investors.

This landscape study is about the listening and feedback practices of the impact ecosystem in the Philippines. The study aims to determine how feedback practices make non-profit organizations become more responsive to the needs, preferences, and opinions of the people and communities they help. The study leveraged AVPN's network in the Philippines and was supported by Fund for Shared Insight (FFSI), a funding collaborative that seeks to improve philanthropy by promoting high-quality listening and feedback in service of equity and justice. The landscape study also explores how the varied funding sources of the non-profit ecosystem may influence the nature of listening practices and applied feedback mechanisms with communities they serve.

By collecting and analyzing the feedback mechanisms of non-profit organizations as they implemented their programs, the study was able to identify best practices and gaps in listening practices. It specifically described, analyzed, and presented current practices and characteristics, covered issue areas, burgeoning feedback methodologies, and successful cases. These formed the basis for recommendations on feedback infrastructure building. This landscape scan is divided into six sections: (i) country profile; (ii) the Philippine impact ecosystem and feedback loops; (iii) feedback mechanisms by organizational type; (iv) crosscutting organizational findings; (v) conclusions; and (vi) recommendations. Twenty non-profit organizations participated in this study comprising 25 individuals interviewed. The approach will be further detailed in the methodology section.



PART 2
COUNTRY
PROFILE

II. COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and economy. The Philippines is an archipelagic country composed of 7,640 islands in Southeast Asia. Per the 2020 census, it has a total population of 109 million people. The World Bank categorizes the Philippines as a lower middle-income country which means it has an average of US\$ 1,045 to US\$ 4,095 of GNI per capita as of 2020. Poverty incidence in the Philippines is equivalent to 16.7% of the total population in 2018, lower than 23.3% in 2015. The Philippines also had one of the most dynamic economies in Asia prepandemic with an annual growth of about 6.4% between 2010 and 2019. This has been supported by solid economic and financial sectors, coupled by a growing middle class, young and skilled labor market and steady flow of remittances.



Governance arrangements. The Philippines has a democratically elected government in the form of a constitutional republic. The President is both head of state and government and leads the executive branch of government. The other branches are the legislative and judiciary. The decentralized government is divided administratively into 16 regions which are further composed of provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays – all officially regarded as local government units (LGUs). Although at the oversight of national government agencies and tasked to implement national policies and follow the remit of national laws, LGUs have an autonomous legal and corporate personality, enabling them to directly and independently undertake activities and investments and receive external funding. However, LGUs still require a national government guarantee for fiscal capacity when undertaking big loans. Their share of national taxes is also set to increase by 55% in 2022 (equivalent to 4.8% of GDP) following the Mandanas Ruling issued in 2018 and affirmed in 2019. This shift in resources, together with the Philippines' decentralized governance arrangements can significantly change the non-profit ecosystem in the country given that LGUs know and serve local communities the most compared with any other organization.

COUNTRY PROFILE

History and legal framework. The broader civil society movement in the Philippines blossomed amidst shifts in the political and economic landscape of the country. The 1986 EDSA Revolution and the election of then President Corazon Aquino gave prominence to the civil society movement in terms of its legal personalities, fund sources, and voice in the newly installed democratic government. It was also at this time that civil society organizations were allowed to receive foreign funding.¹ The current Philippine Constitution, enacted in 1987, encourages and respects the role of non-government organizations (NGOs) in the nation's governance. Specifically, Section 23 of Article II provides that "the State shall encourage non-governmental, community-based or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation"; and Section 15, Article XIII declares that "the state shall respect the role of independent people's organizations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means."

The role of NGOs in Philippine policy making was further embedded in the passage of the Local Government Code in 1991. In Section 34, it stipulates that Local Government Units must "promote the establishment and operation of people's and non-governmental organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy" emphasizing that the local government can enter into joint ventures or cooperative agreements with such NGOs and people's organizations (POs). Section 35 lists a diverse set of areas of allowed ²cooperation. The local legislative council called a Sanggunian, together with the mayor, may also concur to provide financial or in-kind assistance to such POs and NGOs. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) which has supervisory and oversight functions for all LGUs accredits all NGOs at the LGU level who would like to participate in special local planning bodies.

Registration of Non-Profit Organizations. As early as 1906, the Corporation Law already classified private not-for-profit organizations as foundations. However, specific independent and family foundations only became legal entities in 1958 through the Science Act. Intended for scientific and technological research and development, it facilitated private sector participation through the provision of fiscal incentives. This encouraged the creation of family and corporate foundations. It became an organized entity of which families could channel their philanthropic endeavors, often beyond endowments and corporate contributions. The regulatory framework that supports the NPO ecosystems is as follows:

• A non-stock corporation, also referred to as a foundation² derives its income only to be used to further its purpose and operations instead of business or economic activities or a return to its investors, trustees, and officers. Section 87, Title X of the Corporation Code states that income-generating activities are only allowed to the extent it supports the organization's purpose. This also refers to extending grants or endowments for its organizational purposes. Section 88, Title X of the Code also states the purpose of non-stock corporations: they can be formed for charitable, religious, educational, professional, cultural, fraternal, literary, scientific, social, civic service, or similar purposes, like trade, industry, agricultural and like chambers, or any combination. NPOs, non-stock corporations or foundations are registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

¹ Philanthropy In the Philippines: A Local Perspective Host: Ted Hart Guest: Victoria Garchitorena - Ayala Corporation

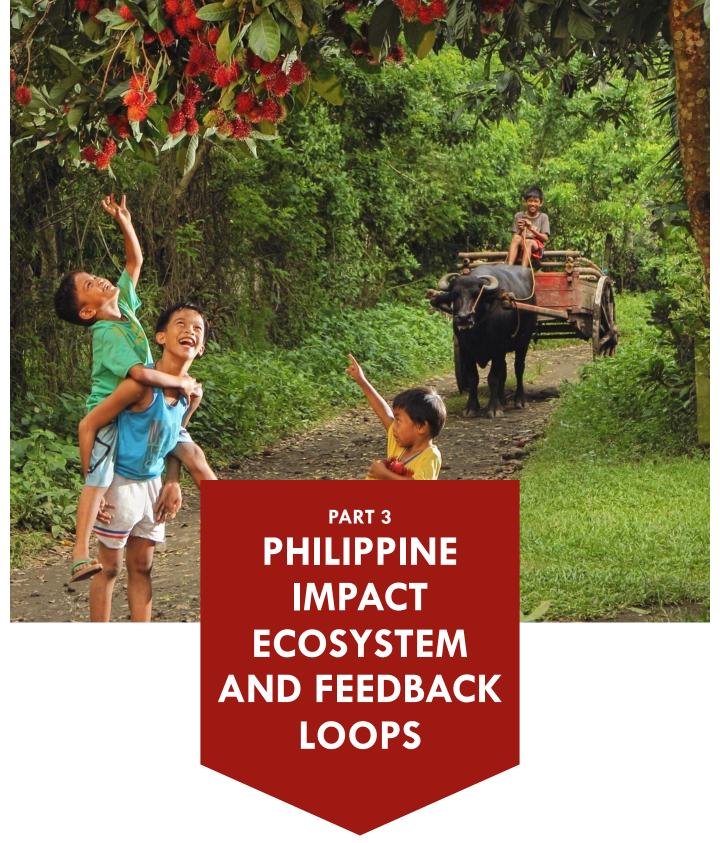
² Further criteria available from Philippine Securities and Exchange Reorganization Law

COUNTRY PROFILE

■ The Philippine legal environment also provides the philanthropy sector a range of incentives which include exemption from real property taxes (80-d of the National Internal Revenue Code), a donor's tax, and individual (6%) and corporate (3%) taxpayers may deduct contributions or gifts in their income tax filings.

NPOs also have several ways to be accredited. Legally, they are registered as non-profit organizations with the SEC. As of 2017, 101,843 NPOs were actively registered with the SEC, while 52,212 NPOs were registered but inactive.³ The Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC), likewise an NGO lists 410 organizations on its website as of 2021. It is a national level accreditation of non-profit organizations and ensures eligibility for tax incentives as a qualified doner institution, which is a requirement of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (Executive Order 720, April 11, 2008). CODE-NGO, the largest coalition of NGOs focused on social development had 12 regional and network members comprising about 1,400 NPOs as of 2017. The Department of Social Welfare and Development also accredited NPOs implementing social welfare and development related activities and services. As of 2017, there were 2,252 accredited service NPOs.

³ AMLC. 2018. Risk Assessment of the Non-Profit Sector in the Philippines. Government of the Philippines.



This section broadly categorizes impact (non-profit) organizations into three types according to their role or function in delivering impact: (i) funders in the form of impact investors, family and corporate foundations; (ii) intermediaries like incubators and impact consultants; and (iii) social purpose organizations (SPOs) such as NGOs and social enterprises as direct-service providers. Table 1 shows these types and identifies their main function in the ecosystem as commonly understood. To be sure, the Philippine impact ecosystem consists of more types of organizations, however these three have been particularly highlighted for the purpose of this research, that is, to understand the feedback practices of funders, intermediaries and SPOs.

Table 1: Types of Impact Organizations

Types	Function	Examples
Funders These organizations are sources of funds may it be in the form of grants, investments or one-off donations.	Grant provider/ Investors	Family and Corporate Foundations; Impact Investors
Intermediaries They provide support to social purpose organizations usually in the form of capacity building or technical assistance.	Capacity building and technical assistance	Incubators; Impact Consultants
Social Purpose Organizations They are considered direct-service organizations who implement projects closest to the ground.	Project implementation or direct-service provision	NGOs and Social Entrepreneurs

Indeed, Table 1 provides a useful classification but the impact system in the Philippines is more complex than it presents. An important finding of this study is that many organizations in the Philippines perform hybrid roles. For instance, family and corporate foundations are both funders and implementers. As funders, they may offer grants, scholarships, or even donations in times of calamities. As implementers, they are involved throughout the project cycle and are present on the ground.

Impact investors, on the other hand, may offer seed funding but also act as incubators that nurture and support nascent social enterprises. To that extent, they also serve the role of intermediaries. Table 2 maps out the functions of the participating organizations in this research and those with hybrid roles.

Table 2: Functions of the Organizations and their Hybrid Roles

GENERAL FUNCTIONS					
			Grant Project Provision Implementation	Capacity Building	Funding in the Form of Loan and Equity
T		Family Foundations	Madrigal Foundatior Zuellig Foundation	1	
Y P E S	Funders	Corporate Foundations	Ayala Foundation Unilab Foundation ABS-CBN Foundatior Lopez Group Foundati		
F O R		Impact Investors		Ignite	cchange Impact Fund Villgro
G A N I Z A T I O N S	Incubators			٧	PhilDev Ve Solve ake Sense
	Impact Consulta	Impact Consultants		Spring Rain Global	
	Social Purpose Organizations	NGOs	Care International START Network Child Fund Save the Children Roots of Health The Asia Foundation		
		Social Enterprises	Magwai Organics		

The hybrid nature of the way non-profit organizations function in the Philippines makes it difficult to classify them. For example, it has become increasingly common for NGOs to provide cash transfers during calamities to the communities they serve. Some global NGOs like the START Network has "anticipatory action" funding streams that are pre-agreed deployment of funds to ensure quick response within seven days from receiving a crisis alert. Foundations on the other hand provide cash grants to NGOs and at the same time can provide direct cash transfer assistance during calamities.

In most cases, the participating organizations, especially foundations, were complemented with partnership arrangements for program and service delivery. Having local partners in the communities allowed for a closer relationship with the people they intended to serve. This was a practice done by both foundations and NGOs. On the other hand, impact investors that solely provide financing and advice to social entrepreneurs have an indirect interaction with communities. The social entrepreneurs facilitate market solutions to community issues using impact investor support.

Box 1: Unilab Foundation as an example of a Hybrid Organization

Unilab Foundation, Inc (ULF), a corporate foundation is one example of an ultrahybrid non-profit organization. In its efforts to focus on the belief that health and wellbeing is holistic (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual), it has embarked in a series of programs and activities that combine the hybrid functions of a foundation that funds and implements, an impact investor that provides seed capital and incubates market-driven social entrepreneur-led solutions; and it is also like an NGO delivering grant-funded services to communities in need either directly or through partner organizations.

The varied functions of ULF are reflected in the various ways feedback is collected and processed as it is mainstreamed into its planning, programming and evaluation. Through different tools at different stages of program delivery, feedback is collected and processed. For example, in an effort to ensure stakeholder satisfaction, codevelopment with stakeholders is a key process. ULF conducts stakeholder feedback opportunities consistently. They also have a results-based monitoring, evaluation and learning framework where even negative feedback is integrated into respective unit action plans. Their Board of Trustees is particularly interested in the collection of stories which focus on feedback from beneficiaries which is also validated by third party evaluators. These processes are all clearly identified in their manual of operations which any of their partners may review.

Almost all the interviewees represented institutions that had sustained client interaction with communities due to their hybrid roles of being funder, intermediary and direct implementer. In some cases, engagement lasts for years and the main purpose is partnership and trust building to become a regular stakeholder in the community's social and economic development.

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Table 3: Nature of Client Interaction

Engagement Type	Description	Type of Organizations	
Indirect	Organization that interacts with clients "behind the scenes" through intermediaries.	Impact investors whose explicit clients are the businesses they invest in and mentor.	
One-off	Organizations that interact with clients only one or, if recurrent, tend to be transactional in nature, with limited opportunity for relationship-building with staff.	Foundations and NGOs involved in humanitarian relief, educational training and mentoring.	
Sustained	Organizations that interact with clients over a longer period in which relationship-building is a primary goal of the interaction.	Funders, Intermediaries and Social Purpose Organizations that have local partners or embed themselves in a community by working with other stakeholders towards collective action.	

Source: Adapted from F4SI

Mapping feedback flows in the impact ecosystem in the Philippines

This section shows that each type of organization has a different feedback flow with the communities they serve. Diagram 1 shows the feedback flow between foundations (who also function as implementers) and the communities they serve. Diagram 2 shows the feedback flow between impact investors and the clients they serve. Note the key distinction: foundations and NGOs have primarily social impact motivations while impact investors may prioritize financial returns to their investment via the performance of the social entrepreneur as their investee

As the two diagrams will show, the feedback flow between foundations and SPOs bring them closer to the communities they serve than the feedback flow between impact investors and their investees.

Funders and Implementers Family / Corporate **Foundations** Feedback Funding flow Social Purpose Organizations **NGOs** Funding flow Feedback **LGUs** Universities Funding flow **Feedback** Individuals **Households Communities**

Diagram 1: Feedback Flow of Funders and Implementers with Beneficiaries

Most corporate foundations are funded by the companies they are affiliated with, which are often founded and led by families. Meanwhile, family foundations tend to be independent of the family corporation and are endowed using private family resources. Nevertheless, despite being funders themselves, both kinds of foundations also receive grants from both international and local grant sources. When the fund source is international, the foundations become direct service providers or capacity builders. Being so, they may directly deliver programs and projects to the communities. For example, they conduct the training modules themselves or have their own staff in the communities being served. In most cases, this allows funders to be closer to the communities they intend to serve and are more aware of the context and needs of individuals and households. In some cases, programs are coursed through regional and local associations, federations of NGOs or individual community-based organizations.

NGOs are some of the best examples of hybrid SPOs. In the Philippines, NGOs are both intermediaries and service delivery providers. Most NGOs receive funding from abroad, provide grants and co-deliver programs with regional or local NGOs. They deal with communities that need to be served directly the most. While some of them facilitate cash transfers distributed directly to individuals or grants to other community-based organizations, most NGOs also work side by side with local organizations in delivering their program services.

Diagram 2 demonstrates that most impact investors do not deal with communities that need to be served directly. For investors whose main "clients" are incubators and social enterprises, engagement with the community happens when undertaking due diligence and impact assessment activities. Otherwise, it is more indirect. Impact investors tend to engage more with their social entrepreneurs, investees, and portfolio of companies. When the engagement involves individual mentoring, the interaction still excludes actual communities. While impact investors are also hybrid organizations because they raise funds, provide funds and deliver their own programs, they are often detached from the communities that need to

Feedback
Funding flow
Intermediaries
Incubators
Funding flow
Social Purpose Organizations
Social Entrepreneurs
Funding flow
Individuals, Households, Communities

Diagram 2: Feedback Flow of Impact Investors and Incubators with Beneficiaries

be served. However, as social entrepreneurs receive funding from foundations and impact investors, some entrepreneurs also assign a board seat to their investors for a fixed period. Social entrepreneurs on the other hand, despite being for-profit, receive grants, loans and payments for their products and services. They serve their clients who are often consumers or other organizations that pay for their services.

Incubators also provide an interesting example of hybrid intermediaries. They provide grants to budding entrepreneurs to support ideation stages and also deliver networking platforms to further support the start-up ecosystem. Just like impact investors, they also do not directly deal with the communities that must be served and foster a more collective approach by supporting a network of social entrepreneurs that directly deal with communities.

Diagrams 1 and 2 show the nature of the engagement of the organizations covered in this study certainly affects the feedback mechanisms amongst the various stakeholders. The hybrid nature of the organizations also shows that listening practices can change depending if they are undertaking their funder or implementer hat, especially from whom the feedback is coming from. The next section looks into how feedback looks like among the participating organizations.





To determine feedback practices of the impact ecosystem in the Philippines, interviews were undertaken using the classifications explained in the previous section, namely: (i) funders such as foundations and impact investor; (ii) intermediaries such as incubators and impact consultants; and (iii) service providers such as non-government organizations and social entrepreneurs. The interviews were based on thematic questions related to how feedback is perceived, the usage of the term feedback, observations on equity and justice, and entities related to feedback. This section presents organization type specific findings. Section V discusses findings related to other thematic questions that apply to most if not all organizational types.

A. Funders (Family/ Corporate Foundations and Impact Investors)

i. Perception of feedback and terms used for feedback

Function and purpose of the organization determine how feedback is practiced. Foundations have a diverse range of programs and activities which includes but not limited to financial assistance, technical advice and in-kind contributions. As such, these provide them opportunities for both formal and informal feedback mechanisms. Meanwhile, impact Investors provide funds to social enterprises. Thus, feedback comes in the form of financial management mentoring sessions towards impact performance.

Some participants perceived feedback as part of impact assessment that must be done for their donor partners following agreed metrics or key performance indicators. As feedback requirements differed per donor, most organizations did not have a centralized feedback mechanism. Any relationship between monitoring and evaluation and the contribution of feedback was program or project specific. Moreover, the more established foundations had dedicated M&E staff or learning officers tasked to collect feedback. This was not the case for impact investors whose staff would wear many hats and perform different functions.

Foundations have established feedback systems in place with a high regard in impact reporting. Some foundations perceive feedback to be synonymous with impact investment measurements such as the social return on investment (SROI) approach or another established tool called Community OS by the Roxas Kalaw foundation or the international standard, IRIS +. Ayala Foundation Inc is known to be one of the pioneers in using SROI approach together with their stakeholders to measure if they are aligned in reaching and achieving the objectives they have jointly set.

Box 2: Feedback Vignettes

Various foundations had interesting stories on how they received feedback from the community and closed the loop. The "integrated area development" project of the Lopez Foundation addressed the varied needs identified by their stakeholders from different sectors. On one occasion, the Archbishop with jurisdiction of the area requested support for the publication of a book on top of the committed project deliverables. Based on feedback from fisherfolks, the Lopez Foundation updated the design of boats they have provided. One summer, they have also received and actioned requests to support circumcision activities in the community.

Ayala Foundation Inc. (AFI) also had countless stories of closing the loop through unprogrammed activities requested by the community. Pre-pandemic in Basilan, then governor requested support to increase connectivity to support peace-building measures. As part of a conglomerate, AFI was able to respond through their affiliate companies. Another instance was the collaboration of AFI and a Spanish firm to distribute tablets to children which was useful for online learning during the pandemic. They received feedback that parents are very much part of a child's learning process and must be included in their programs.

The ABS-CBN Network also has an "Integrated Project Service System" (IPSS) in the form of an online dashboard where anyone from the network could get project updates and contact information of anyone in the value chain such as community partners, suppliers of goods and services, professional organizations and counterparts from the government. Results and other program delivery information were also available on the IPSS. The IPSS was anchored on specific TV shows covering different topics such as education, livelihood, children's rights, environmental protection and humanitarian relief. Although it is not a feedback processing portal, the IPSS provides accessible information and facilitates quick action and response to feedback. The ABS CBN Foundation eventually adopted the IPSS and the Lopez Group Foundation, Inc. is adopting it for all member foundations. The migration and creation of the dashboard was initiated in 2020 and is due for roll out soon. The Ayala Community for Social Impact Council (ACSI) was also created pre-pandemic to ensure alignment among community initiatives of different Ayala conglomerate members. This facilitates feedback among conglomerate's individual foundations so they can serve the communities better together.

Feedback is a good catchall phrase that some foundations and impact investors use to capture their various associated meanings with it. They find feedback to be synonymous with the social value of their investments, M&E, results tracking and impact measurements. For some impact investors with lean teams whose M&E systems are tapped only for donorfunded activities, feedback is more loosely used and embedded in other activities like mentoring and learning sessions. It is in the most basic form of listening and acting upon it when able. Although monitoring, evaluation and learning systems in foundations are in place, feedback is still a catch-all "listening" tool that uses different platforms to hear from communities and partners. Any measurement tools are not specific to listening but form part of a larger system that enables the organization to perform better and be responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

Those with established feedback systems, collate feedback for the purpose of program and project improvement. For example, Unilab Foundation considers feedback as an essential tool that captures and documents the lived experiences, perspectives, and emotions of the individuals who are greatly impacted or affected by its programs. These are then interpreted and processed under the lens of continuous improvement which will be used to influence the future of other programs with better designs, strengthened evidence-based decision making, and improved engagement with partners and beneficiaries. Other foundations use feedback as an essential learning tool to adjust their strategies in dealing with local government officials and other partners.

Box 3: Use of Network as Way for Collective Action

The Zuellig Family Foundation (ZFF) focuses on leadership transformation and health governance by directly engaging local government units and their attached instrumentalities with health-related functions. As an independent family foundation, it does not have the machinery and presence across the Philippines of other conglomerate foundations. Despite this, it employs a whole of community approach with stakeholders from government, church, NGO, academe and maximizes its memberships in networks and associations. For example, as a member of the Association of Foundations (AF), ZFF is able to tap AF's regional members and work together on common causes. By being partners with stakeholders working on common goals in common areas, ZFF is able to amplify the way they deliver results and engage the local government.

Feedback is significantly different from how impact investors use the term. Feedback is not used formally as a term but it is seen more as a regular conversation of an investor to know how their investees are doing. As their relationship relies on mentoring, making sense of the entrepreneurs' inputs and helping them have support systems, there is less reference to feedback but known more as check-ins.

ii. Observations on equity and justice among donors and beneficiaries

As foundations are hybrids --funders and implementers--, they have a closer presence and involvement at the community level much more than pure funders. Most foundations develop community leaders by engaging local partners from the communities they wish to serve. In turn, this aides them in continuing programs despite pandemic-induced lockdowns or community quarantine measures.

Open communication and feedback mechanisms among funders empowers beneficiaries to co-own projects. By listening better, foundations are able to design pilot activities or test prototypes for a proof of concept before scaling it up. On one occasion, fisherfolk provided information on the most suitable design for boats one foundation was providing.

Demand-driven initiatives strengthen the voice of the communities in need. As programs are designed to address gaps, most foundations have shifted to demand-driven support which they determine through a series of consultations and feedback mechanisms amongst beneficiaries who identify the demand. By having feedback loops, they are able to ensure they are able to respond to the demand. As beneficiaries are heavily involved in participation and decision making, they are empowered to influence the direction of the initiatives. Several foundations emphasized that this is very important in trust-building because if they fail to meet the agreed objectives or fulfill the expressed needs, trust may be eroded and demand may cease. This was true for both large and small foundations who see the entire effort of community building a long-term effort. Foundations often have exit strategies in place to avoid dependence but it is inevitable that other partners will come in to support the community's other needs.

Impact investors identify social entrepreneurs as their main beneficiaries. Unlike foundations who have boots on the ground and are closest to the communities they serve; impact investors deliver impact through the social entrepreneurs they support. In this sense, they are one-step removed from the ground and do not deal directly with the target beneficiaries of social enterprises. Yet by mentoring the social enterprises to be as effective as they can be in delivering social impact, investors receive feedback from their mentees and in turn provide technical and financial advisory services. In this regard, it is still very much a two-way feedback process with opportunities to close the loop though in a different scale as the communities are periphery to the equation.

Box 4: Mentoring and Check-ins

Several impact investors interviewed for this study included mentoring sessions with their portfolio companies and social entrepreneurs which received their funding. While a return on investment is paramount, the more important return is the social impact the investment facilitates. For some impact investors, they shepherd their investees towards performance through regular mentoring and check-in sessions. These one-on-one conversations provide an avenue for both formal and informal feedback and on occasion, immediately close the feedback loop. Social entrepreneurs can be candid about what they need and advice on. Investors can provide immediate guidance and share needed information. Although based on certain financial and management principles, mentoring and check-ins do not rely on reporting templates often used by large organizations. Instead, the one-on-one conversations provide an open and regular platform for investors to listen and for investees to give feedback.

B. Intermediaries (Incubators and Impact Consultant)

i. Perception of feedback and terms used for feedback

There is more flexibility in feedback mechanisms with communities served when funded by corporations. Beyond metrics and figures, these donors preferred anecdotes, narratives and other stories as a way of feedback. One possible explanation is that foundations themselves have implementing experiences, and appreciate the importance for such qualitative feedback and engagement with beneficiary communities. At the same time, narratives are effective means to communicate success.

Feedback is a collective and participatory activity organized by incubators. There is a platform for shared feedback within their network at the end of their activities. These sharing sessions are complemented with standard entry and exit surveys/questionnaires. It is noted to be a proactive initiative for information sharing and strengthening collective action especially when certain feedback demands response.

Knowledge products institutionalize feedback. In some cases, feedback on particular projects is collected and eventually documented into knowledge products. Using a range of tools such as surveys and interviews, publishing feedback makes it more accessible for others to learn and act upon. However, for such use, there could be a bias for collecting positive feedback, while leaving out negative feedback.

Feedback is perceived to complement the Monitoring and Evaluation system. M&E is the whole process of routine data collection and analysis of whether impact targets set by funding partners have been achieved. Aligned to this, incubators usually have dialogues with their social entrepreneurs to know how they are and what they need to ensure that they are on the right track. In turn, incubators also ask for feedback from social entrepreneurs for them to be able to provide appropriate support and capacity building activities.



The pandemic lessened and limited informal feedback sharing that often happened during trips, meals and coffee breaks pre-pandemic. Online interactions on a range of platforms removed candid sharing as there is always an agenda, discussions are structured and largely scheduled. Also, online feedback sessions often take place within a group, taking away the opportunity for sideline one-on-one chats from the pre-pandemic era. Not everyone is comfortable to share candid opinions in a group, especially when online and recorded. This is difficult especially with new counterparts who have not established a strong rapport and partnership during the pandemic.

Aside from social media platforms, most incubators used a range of communication apps that engendered more informal feedback sharing among their network members. Examples of which were Telegram and Slack where social entrepreneurs were more likely to share actional feedback despite not being asked or explicitly talking about work.

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ii. Observations on equity and justice among donors and beneficiaries

Level of comfort to share feedback highly depends on the entrepreneurs' proximity to the capital city. Innovation programs get a lot of feedback from Manila-based entrepreneurs, which could not be said about those from provinces or other regions in the Philippines. This could be due to a number of reasons, including provincial-capital divides, language barriers, and cultural acceptability of straightforwardness. As one incubator shared, it had to make an extra effort to develop a relationship with those coming from outside of Manila, so that they can accurately be represented in the reports submitted to donors.

iii. Suggestions on how to enhance feedback and listening practices in the Philippines

Pilot grants from foreign donors may improve feedback practices. Prior experiences of some impact investors and incubators in mainstreaming a gender lens investing toolkit through pilot activities was a common suggested model for adopting a new toolkit on listening.

Incubators suggest tapping local support organizations that are sensitive to the sociocultural peculiarities of the Philippines. This could increase, according to some incubators, the inclusivity and accountability of organizations through feedback and listening practices.

C. Social Purpose Organizations (NGOs and Social Entrepreneurs)

i. Perception of feedback and terms used for feedback

Local gatekeepers are key. NGOs and social entrepreneurs emphasized the importance of tapping community gatekeepers and leaders to be conveyors of feedback as they are the ones most households trust to express sentiments on their behalf. Culturally, "go-betweens" are important channels in the Philippines when giving feedback, especially when what is shared could be embarrassing or awkward.

Larger NGOs have established partnerships with local organizations and have dedicated staff that are essential parts of feedback systems. For example, ChildFund International works across 21 provinces in the Philippines with the help of 12 local partners and an assigned partnership portfolio manager for each. Together, they plan the program, review implementation, and even determine funding needs. These processes and dialogues facilitate conversations that inform fundraising and business development needs. While this does not imply necessarily a standard for all NGOs, this suggests besides the M&E team, the business development adviser could be another internal agent to be tapped for feedback collection and enhancement.

Larger NGOs have existing monitoring, evaluation and learning procedures and teams who utilize an adaptive management approach. In contrast with the perceived rigidity of donor funding, most NGOs reported that communication is open, reporting is flexible, and support is accessible. One example is the openness of donors to pivot and realign budgets due to the changing needs of the communities due to the pandemic. All NGOs reported that even pre-pandemic, there were already feedback mechanisms in place that allow them to communicate with their donors to immediately address needs of the communities they serve. For example, The Asia Foundation (TAF) has institutionalized adaptive programming as part of its monitoring, evaluation and learning processes. This has helped them process any feedback received even outside the formal process and close the loop. This flexibility is both a way of work of their donor partners.

ii. Observations on equity and justice among donors and beneficiaries

The pandemic shifted equity and justice in terms of how NGOs can access their beneficiaries. Service delivery changed due to social distancing measures. On occasions when NGO staff could not travel, only the beneficiaries with access to technology could participate. For example, Roots of Health previously provided direct education to people but had to shift online with private schools and colleges. Immediately, their beneficiaries changed and could not reach the majority that do not have online access.

Box 5: Board Seats for Marginalized Sectors in NGOs

If some impact investors require a board seat in the portfolio companies and social enterprises, they provide funding to, one NGO provides board seats to marginalized sectors to ensure they are part of the planning and implementation approval process. Roots of Health, an NGO based in Palawan addressing reproductive health, provides training to young adults in cooperation with various educational and health institutions. Although their activities are one off and they move on to another school after the delivery of their learning modules, they assign two board seats each to women and another two to youth representatives. With this, they ensure that there is constant opportunity for the least voices to be heard and reflected in their programs. In this manner, they get feedback from the representatives of the sectors they serve, voluntarily holding the NGO more accountable than usual. As Roots of Health perceive the relationship with the community as more of a partnership than an asymmetrical one, having board members from the communities they serve allow them to be more embedded among the broader stakeholders doing good in their areas.



FINDINGS

V. CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS



This section discusses findings that apply to most if not all the organizations that participated in this landscape study. It specifically presents findings based on the thematic questions used in the interview. To learn about feedback practices of the impact ecosystem, the organizations were asked about the perception of feedback and how the term is used internally. This section also discusses tools, methodologies and infrastructure that the organizations use to collect formal and informal feedback.

Respondents were asked about the role of language in collecting feedback and observations on equity and justice, especially notions of power dynamics among donors and beneficiaries. One common theme that respondents shared but was not part of the questionnaire was the receipt of informal feedback, one of the aspects of listening that organizations wanted to improve on. This section closes with impressions of how feedback practices can be improved, perceptions on entities that can help the respondents improve, and their receptiveness to receiving a grant to support improved listening.

A. Perception about feedback

Feedback practice benefits from a culture of openness in the Philippines. Filipinos generously share positive feedback whenever there is an opportunity to do so. Recognition of this behavior was acknowledged by all interviewees. In fact, most organizations leverage this good behavior by encouraging feedback in the planning, delivery, and reporting stages. However, negative feedback is more difficult to process, with some organizations not knowing how to incorporate such feedback in their design-to-execution process.

Feedback aids relationship and trust-building. Feedback, especially when conducted face to face, fosters trust and builds personal relationships with beneficiaries. This type of social capital is particularly critical for organizations committed to a multi-year project with communities. Further, feedback has the same benefits for non-beneficiary stakeholders such as local politicians, businessmen, religious and other community leaders who serve as community gatekeepers. In this sense, feedback and listening practices enhance social capital for all stakeholders involved.

Box 6: Partnership-building with the Local Government

Among the three types of participating organizations in this landscape study, foundations and NGOs cooperate with the government the most. The Philippines has legally established participatory platforms that encourage the role of foundations and NGOs in the planning and implementation of policies, projects and activities at both the national and local government level. Although no government official or agency was interviewed for this study, participants who dealt with the government shared their insights on the nature of their feedback and cooperation with some government agencies they work with.

Large foundations like the ABS-CBN Foundation, Ayala Foundation, the Lopez Group Foundation, Unilab Foundation and Zuellig Family Foundation have a close relationship with a range of government agencies across governance levels due to the nature of the programs they deliver and the sectors they address. This cooperation is evident across all stages of their initiatives from program and project preparation and design, actual service delivery, and assessing results. The relationship often isn't a transfer of financial resources but a partnership between two institutions working together to serve a common community or sector in need.

For example, Unilab foundation has partnerships with the Department of Health on the reforms they support across the country. This close relationship also affords a more accessible listening ear between two parties. Ayala Foundation Inc. (AFI) is able to quickly learn of any non-program needs of their government counterparts and tap the foundations of the entire Ayala conglomerate to "close the loop" and respond to certain ascertained needs and requests. Having the ear of their government counterparts also allows them to have balance between suitability and sustainability in the support they provide in cooperation with the government. The Lopez Group Foundation, together with ABS-CBN foundation is able to do the same in their "Integrated Area Development" approach to community building. In this manner, the foundations are not just providing an ad hoc support to government but a long-term partner but with explicit areas of assistance and a clear exit strategy towards empowering the communities they serve.

As the national government devolves more powers and financing to local governments, more resources will be available to communities. This will change the operations of non-profit organizations at the community level. However, increased financing capacity among local governments may not translate to increased technical capacity to implement programs and projects. The shifts in capacities at the sub-national level together with the fluid economic situation brought about by the pandemic can alter the feedback mechanisms between foundations and the local governments they serve. Yet the foundations are mindful: they do not compete with the government; they have a role in assisting the communities they serve by cooperating with the government.

Box 6: Partnership-building with the Local Government (con't)

NGOs in particular have a closer working relationship with the government. NGOs sit at planning boards at both the national and sub-national levels, having a say at the design stages of policies and plans. Philippine law mandates that the civil society sector is consulted and at the same time, NGOs are required by law to coordinate all their activities with local governments. This is more evident during humanitarian response needs where NGOs are still required to identify the communities and provide the help needed based on areas and services the local government has pre-identified. These all encompass formal and informal feedback processes which include a lot of paperwork, meetings and approvals. These consultation processes have also improved through the years to ensure resources are allocated to the most in need. There are perceptions that these efforts are laborious and delays the actual response but these avoid duplication and channel resources to where help is needed the most.

Feedback and listening are perceived to be useful at the project design stage. Most foundations, incubators and NGOs shared that they consult and co-design initiatives with the communities they serve. Although all types of organizations had different ways of consulting with their local partners and beneficiaries, they agree feedback at the early stage of the project design is helpful. Consultations with local partners was as essential stage of their preparatory work. Pre-pandemic, this also meant visiting the actual project sites and meeting community gatekeepers. One foundation does the community insighting services at the community before large program components are conceptualized with their other coconglomerate foundations. Although impact investors don't often consult the communities that their beneficiaries serve, they conduct due diligence by visiting ang consulting with the proposed impact side prior to fund provision. Co-designing a project with the beneficiary is most institutionalized among NGOs which prioritizes partnership and community building among their top goals.

Feedback is weak in one-off engagements with communities. Although questionnaires and leaflets may be provided to give feedback, not all beneficiaries revert back because there is no opportunity to close the loop or conduct a second round of the activity. At best, the feedback from one-off projects is applied to the next community. In these instances, the same communities or target beneficiaries do not benefit from feedback loops that could have improved project implementation or iteration.

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS

Feedback is key but there are no known tools or frameworks. Organizations were unanimous in acknowledging the importance of feedback and listening practices, however when asked about what tools or frameworks they used, many identified M&E approaches while some admitted that they conduct it more informally without a system in place. To be sure, M&E and feedback are not mutually exclusive and can reinforce each other, but this could be indicative of a void in the tools of impact management focused on listening to the voices of the least heard.

B. Tools, methodologies, and infrastructure used for feedback

Feedback is collected and received in different forms. There is a plethora of tools used in collecting feedback as shown in Table 4. The point here is that while organizations attempt to earn feedback, they may have no guidance in knowing how to integrate informal and formal feedback, how technology can be leveraged, how the quality of these tools may vary, and altogether how to make sense of the data collected, especially when feedback earned from different tools present contradictory findings.

Table 4: Tools and Infrastructure for Feedback Collection

Internet-based	Standard Tools	Customized Platforms	Standard Methodologies
Social media platforms like Facebook, Messenger, Instagram	Commercial and internet- based TV and radio	Cloud based feedback platform – call, consent, recorded on the cloud, automatic database	Annual reports, revenue reports, financial statements, Entry and exit questionnaires, surveys, performance ratings, audits
MS Teams, zoom, slack, google jam boards	Leafletting, e-mail newsletters	Tablets to answer a survey	Preparation meetings, debrief meetings, board meetings
Viber, Slack, Telegram, notion, Evernote	Feedback box in the community	Integrated Public Service System Dashboard	Check-ins, dialogues; Feedback and check-in sessions
Google docs and other similar platforms			

C. Language for feedback

Formal feedback is ultimately collected in the English language. Activities such as workshop facilitation, meetings and check-ins designed to collect feedback are predominantly done in English. This is surprising given that the Philippines is home to more than a hundred languages and dialects in addition to Filipino (derived from Tagalog) and English as official

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS

languages. One possible explanation is that feedback from beneficiaries is often presented in M&E documents, which are almost always presented in English. Still, this could be a language barrier to many beneficiaries who may not have the level of English proficiency at which they can best express themselves.

Through local partners, organizations are able to communicate in the language spoken by the beneficiaries. Organizations that implement projects outside Metro Manila acknowledge that engagement is better if they are able to code switch when needed. This is only possible if they implement with local partners who are from the communities themselves. Their local counterparts serve as impromptu translators. While participants are more candid if they can communicate in their local dialect, the local partners are responsible for conveying the feedback in English. For example, Unilab Foundation relies on counterparts at Ateneo de Zamboanga to gather feedback in the local dialect. Similarly, ChildFund International relies on their on-the-ground managers who speak the local dialect to translate back and forth between them and target beneficiaries. Others with dedicated communications teams draft the materials in English and the local partners translate. For ad hoc projects -- for instance, in times of emergency disaster relief – gaining feedback using the local language becomes even more challenging in the absence of established local partners.

D. Observations on equity and justice among donors and beneficiaries

Some organizations do not use the terms "donor" and "beneficiary" to avoid reinforcing perceptions of inequity. Instead, recipients or beneficiaries are called "participants" while communities are called "partners". Following the same principle, some organizations ask that "ma'am" and "sir" as titles of authority and power distance be replaced with "kuya" and "ate", which are familial terms translated as "brother" and "sister".

Because most organizations acknowledge the reality of power dynamics, most organizations try to address it. One organization seeks to lessen this gap through inorganization workshops on leadership transformation and empowerment activities. Most organizations aspire to empower their partners and increase their sense of agency. Others, on the other hand, think that asymmetries in power positions can be overcome by embedding themselves in the community, working directly with beneficiaries as partners, and involving residents in the different stages of the project cycle. What is not clear, however, is whether they intentionally use listening and feedback activities as a means to further close the power gap between them and the people they seek to serve.

Box 7: Closing the Loop

Majority of the organizations interviewed shared examples of closing the loop or responding to feedback they received. In some NGOs, it is part of their standard processes to acknowledge any feedback received and pass it on to respective colleagues who can act on it and ensure that the result is conveyed back to the sender. A common example is exclusion from disaster relief distributions with some households wondering if they will ever receive the same support as other neighbors. As NGO and foundation resources are scarce, immediate deployment of relief goods cannot cover all affected households unlike LGUs that need to provide for all. Both organizations need to consult with the LGUs to determine which areas are most in need so NGOs can target households more effectively for the distribution of relief goods. Feedback helps NGOs foundation either target better, improve the quality of their distribution processes or even the contents of their relief packages.

Among foundations and incubators, a common example of closing the loop is adjusted reporting and meeting requirements. Frequency of meetings and reports were reduced based on feedback. Most donor-supported organizations also had open communication channels that were helpful during the pandemic. With travel restrictions, most organizations had to re-align their travel budgets to other activities. Incubators organized online events instead. In one example, a foundation redesigned boats they were providing to a seaside community based on feedback from fisherfolks. Another incubator was also able to spur the creation of a new innovative solutions grant based on informal feedback they received on Facebook. They relayed this feedback to their funders and received support to create the facility.

E. Informal feedback

All respondents alluded to the value of informal feedback they give and receive. While many see genuine feedback rests on candid informal conversations, most organizations feel that they do not have an intentional process for gaining informal feedback. In some cases, informal feedback is shrouded in anonymity disclaimers which limit staff from taking action or providing a response.

The pandemic lessened opportunities for informal feedback. Most organizations miss face-to-face events where at the sidelines or during post-gathering moments, informal feedback is naturally given. Funders, Incubators and NGOs miss even the simple coffee and cake snack sessions where candid sharing often occurs. Using social media platforms for informal conversations could partly address this problem, however many beneficiaries do not have access to the internet or the device for such conversations (e.g. zoom call over the smartphone). Access to electricity especially during typhoon season can also be an issue.

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS

F. Gaps and areas for improvement

The organizations unanimously acknowledged there is still room for improvement, which are summarized in the following categories:

- Pandemic feedback collection needs to be improved. Established feedback mechanisms were successful activities of pre-pandemic times. These days, most organizations acknowledge the need to innovate in lieu of face to face interactions. Listening activities and feedback tools applicable in the period of on-and-off lockdowns are needed. Overall, most organizations need guidance on how to facilitate listening when face to face conversations may not be possible anytime soon.
- Processing feedback in a purposive and meaningful way. Many respondents do not know what to do with feedback received outside the usual M&E and impact assessment templates. Similarly, feedback gained from social media is often hard to interpret for organizations, since it is not always clear whether it is a case of trolling or genuine sentiment. Ultimately, what is helpful for organizations is if they can adopt existing feedback tools and frameworks which can easily be localised for their specific purposes.
- Dealing with negative feedback and anonymity. Some respondents lamented that while feedback mechanisms are generally strong and prevalent in the Philippines, it mostly applies to positive feedback. Negative feedback is more difficult to solicit and process. In general, beneficiaries are reluctant to give less-than flattering feedback during formal listening sessions. If successfully solicited, some organizations expressed difficulty in knowing how to adjust programs vis-a-vis mixed reviews.

Box 8: What to do about Negative Feedback and Perceived Gossip?

Among respondents, foundations and NGOs had the greatest number of platforms and processes that facilitated the receipt of various forms of feedback, especially the informal and negative. Opportunities for informal feedback often also provided a listening ear to feedback that is shared with a preference for anonymity. Without validation, it is easy for informal feedback to be perceived as gossip. This is what happens when the feedback is often negative. The story must be relayed but the messenger must remain anonymous.

For some NGOs, the literal feedback box they left in key locations in the community helped get anonymous feedback but this has been difficult to continue during the pandemic. One NGO even shared that they were able to collect negative feedback openly only when an external fund manager was hired to oversee project implementation. Perceived as independent to the project team, the fund manager received more actionable inputs than the project team despite measures to collect feedback. However, some NGOs noted that without anonymity, project participants often only candidly shared negative feedback once the project was ended. Unfortunately, this does not provide an opportunity to close the loop.

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS

G. Enlisting Feedback and Listening Consultants

All organizations interviewed have not engaged any entity to help them improve their internal feedback practices. Most organizations are unaware if there are experts or capacity builders in the Philippines that could improve listening and feedback practices of non-profit organizations. If they enlist the help of an external expert, they shared that the most logical touchpoint within their organization would be their M&E team.

Motivations to improve feedback and listening differ. While all organizations may be keen to improve, some want to focus on informal feedback, others are interested in knowing how it could improve outcomes, and still others want to develop a listening system aligned with their M&E.



PART 6
CONCLUSIONS

VI. CONCLUSIONS



- Family and corporate foundations are hybrids, combining funding and implementation functions. Due to their extensive presence and partnerships all over the Philippines, foundations are also close to the communities they serve which in turn give them better access to feedback from the ground. Due to the hybrid nature of foundations as both funder and implementer, they have the capacity to close the loop. They have the resources financial, advisory and in-kind donations to respond to the requests of their partners and communities. At times, it is not a question of whether the foundations could address requests but rather the capacity of the communities to absorb and utilize any assistance extended to them.
- Impact investors and incubators identify social entrepreneurs as their main stakeholders, with whom they develop a mentor-mentee relationship. The feedback mechanisms are part of the learning programs they deliver instead of a separate M&E mechanism meant to track and report upon agreed metrics. Despite investing in social enterprises, among all the the organizations, impact investors and incubators are the most detached from the communities they serve as they only directly deal with the social entrepreneurs and investees.
- Closest to the communities served, social purpose organizations (SPOs) have established feedback practices, but how they do it and whether feedback informs the project depends on the funders regardless of the SPO's size. Some NGOs have established monitoring and evaluation teams that track reporting needs and communication teams that "harvest" stories and anecdotes to give life to figures and performance indicators, which in turn, feed into processes and are made available to donors and the larger public.

CONCLUSIONS

- Face to face feedback has been limited during the pandemic. Technology has facilitated feedback among all three organization types and their beneficiaries, but it was only possible for those with access to technology. All organizations also noted the value of candid and informal conversations and that it was a way of getting feedback prepandemic. However, all organizations acknowledge the need to improve how informal feedback is processed, stored, analyzed and acted upon to be useful during program delivery.
- The lack of face-to-face program delivery during the pandemic limited access to informal feedback from partners and stakeholders. All organizations noted the value of candid and informal conversations was a way of work pre-pandemic. Activities ranged from field visits, brown bag and coffee sessions and large summits which convened all their partners together physically in one location.
- Technology has facilitated the receipt of increased unsolicited informal feedback for all types of organizations as feedback can now be received through their social media channels, publicly available contact information and designated hotlines. Given this, organizations acknowledge the need to improve how informal feedback is processed, stored, analyzed and acted upon so that it can be useful for program delivery. As unsolicited and informal feedback are distinct from data collected from established M&E procedures, the organizations do not have a robust way of making sense of informal feedback.
- Though everybody agrees feedback is needed, some smaller organizations have expressed constraints in devoting resources for systematic feedback outside M&E. As M&E is essential in project management it often required dedicated staff which some impact investors and incubators did not have. To accommodate improved feedback practices, they are keener to learn about mainstreaming it in their operations and processes. It will not require additional staff but change the way current staff approach feedback.
- Most organizations veer away from the term beneficiaries and instead they identify them as partners, stakeholders, participants and mentees. Whether it is a funder, incubator or social purpose organization, all except for one were proactively empowering the communities they serve through their programs and services. Both foundations and SPOs noted that staff are explicitly mindful to ensure their work does not reinforce social and economic divides.



PART 7
RECOMMENDATIONS

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness Building and Case Building.

While respondents are unanimous in acknowledging the importance of feedback, they are not adopting any widely known feedback tools or accessing capacity building resources to enhance their listening practices. That is a clear gap that could be addressed beginning with awareness building that highlights the case for feedback tools (e.g. Listeng4Good tools). A strategic and integrated communications campaign can be developed to get the Philippine impact ecosystem excited about feedback practices -- why it is important for beneficiaries and how it opens new opportunities for innovation, partnerships and better outcomes of programs, to name a few benefits.

Pilot Testing

Following the above, key funders in the Philippines can be identified as pilot organizations to test feedback tools. In turn, their experience can be showcased and shared with a small convening of other influential funders who, collectively, can move the needle in terms of listening practices in the Philippine ecosystem. For this to be successful, preliminary information-sharing and trust-building activities among them must be undertaken.

Localization.

A one-size-fits-all model for feedback practice is unlikely to work. As organizations vary in their feedback flows, they also have different needs in terms of listening practices. These differences are affected by their fund sources, size, scale of partnerships, and proximity to the communities in need. Although listening and feedback principles may be universal, its application will be distinct to the operations of the organization. To this end, Philippines organizations will have to put skin in the game in terms of identifying appropriate feedback performance and metrics. Running pilot tests will lend insights on how this could be done.

Working with Networks and Associations.

Use organizational networks or associations as a channel for spreading the feedback tools. All three organizational types indicated the value of collective action in improving their feedback practices. This recommendation is of course dependent on the concurrence and participation of established associations. But if successful, they could be good entry points in demonstrating feedback benefits as well as identifying future feedback coaches.

Addressing Resource Implications.

Despite all organizations being keen to improve their feedback operations, not all are amenable to adjusting their processes based on unknown resource implications. Questions about resource allocations will have to be tackled upfront in pursuing the recommendations stated above.





A. Methodology

The landscape scan used primary and secondary research through desk-based literature review and by conducting virtual key informant interviews with funding collaboratives to discern their listening and communicating practices both with the people they provide services to and funders to address common goals. The landscape scan undertook three phases: literature review and secondary research, interviews, analysis and recommendations.

Phase One: Literature Review and Secondary Research

With the aim of understanding the local non-profit ecosystem, literature was gathered to make sense of current trends and feedback practices of key actors. The second step was to identify organizations and individuals for in-depth interviews in Phase Two (see Table 1 for the list of interviewees). AVPN leveraged its network of members and partners in the funder collaborative in the Philippines to identify and curate an appropriate invitation list of leading organizations for interview. The list includes a combination of foundations, investors, and NGOs that have been active in major social topics so as to capture the ecosystem in the Philippines.

Phase Two: Primary data collection and in-depth Interviews

The virtual interviews with the listed organizations used an interview questionnaire.

Interview Guide

Following F4SI's outline, the interviews were based on the interview guide below. A guide questionnaire was provided to the interviewees together with the invitation. The individual interviews explored a common theme as indicated in the bullets below. However, questions were tweaked depending on the type of organization to set a distinction among funders who are foundations and impact investors; intermediaries such as incubators; and service providers who are often social entrepreneurs and non-government organizations. The study was unable to reach out to government officials during the prescribed interview period.

General theme

- Feedback patterns between NGOs and beneficiaries
- Feedback patterns between NGOs and funders
- Feedback patterns between funders and beneficiaries
- Tools, methodologies and infrastructure used to collect feedback
- Most needed improvements to accelerate high quality feedback
- Gap between power and least heard voices
- Issues of equity and justice in the particular context
- Approaches to improve the issues through listening and feedback

APPENDIX

Findings: Nonprofits/NGOs

- What does feedback look like between nonprofits, community-based organizations and NGOs and the people they serve?
- In your local country context, do people use the term "feedback" or some other term? And when they use whatever word, what do they mean by it?
- What tools or infrastructure are used?
- How are they acting on that feedback?
- In how many languages does feedback collection happen?
- What do NGOs say about what is most needed to accelerate and improve highquality feedback work?
- How does power operate in these relationships?
- Whose voices are least heard?
- How do issues of equity and justice play out in this context and how could highquality listening and feedback advance equity and justice?

Findings: Foundations

- What does feedback look like between funders and the people they ultimately seek to serve?
- Other questions above

Findings: Government

- What does feedback look like between the government and the people they ultimately seek to serve?
- Other questions above

Findings: Other entities

- Are there any other entities that are relevant in the feedback field in COUNTRY?
- What does feedback look like between these entities and the people they ultimate seek to help?

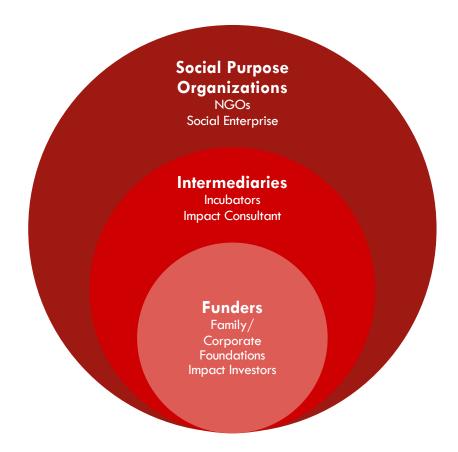
Insights and recommendations

 Whether and where Shared Insight grant investments would support and accelerate current feedback and listening practices in the country

A shortlist of about thirty organizations were invited for an interview between 29 July to 13 August 2021. More than twenty organizations accepted the interview invitation. However, some could not be considered for the study due to the following reasons:

- An interviewee turned to be a for-profit organization whose clients are philanthropic institutions
- Interviewees did not have authority to speak on behalf of the organization
- The interview could not proceed as the interview had poor internet connect and did not provide an alternative interview date

Figure 1: Participating Organizations



Almost forty organizations were invited to participate in the study during the interview period of 22 July to 23 August 2021. While some interviewees could not be counted due to retracted authority and weak internet connection, the landscape study had a total of 25 individuals from 20 organizations who were interviewed for this study for about 1 hour each. The interviewees varied in seniority, age and roles within the organization. Some interviewees were the executive directors and founders themselves. While the majority had management and business development or entrepreneurship positions, some had feedback and monitoring related positions. Some of the key positions of the interviewees are in Table 1.

Table 1: List of Participating Organizations and Interviewee Designations

Organization		Designation	Description
	ABS-CBN Foundation	Program Director	
	Ayala Foundation	Executive Director	
	Lopez Foundation	President and Executive	Corporate
	Lopez Foundation	Director	Foundation
		Strategic Support Director	Touridation
	Unilab Foundation	Monitoring, Evaluation and	
Funders		Learning Officer	
	Madrigal Foundation	Executive Director	Family
	Zuellig Foundation	Partnerships Director	Foundation
	xchange	Director	Impact
	Villgro	Program Manager	Investors
	Ignite Impact	Founder	
	Make Sense	Head of Strategic	
		Partnerships	
	We Solve	Board Member	Incubators
		Monitoring, Evaluation and	
Intermediaries	PhilDev	Learning Officer	
		Policy coordinator/	
		Incubation Officer	
		Entrepreneurship Manager	
	Spring Rain Global	President and Owner	Impact
		Project Assistant	Consultant
Social Purpose Organizations	Care International	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	
	Child Fund	Business Development Adviser	
	The Asia Foundation	Senior Program Officer	NGOs
	Roots of Health	Executive Director	
		Monitoring, Evaluation and	
	Save the Children	Learning Officer	
	Start Network	Forewarn Coordinator	
	Magwai Organics	Co-Owner	Social
	inagirai organics		Enterprise

Challenges and Limitations of the study

- Some challenges and limitations were also encountered during the data collection phase of this study.
- Some of the interviewees just joined their organizations right before and during the pandemic and considered themselves fairly new. The same people also could not compare pre-pandemic and current feedback situations in their organizations.
- Although the intention was to leverage AVPN's membership roster in the Philippines, not all of them were available during the interview period so non-members had to be invited as well.
- Another limitation of the interview was the ability and willingness of the interviewees to answer the questions. While some had prepared answers based on the questionnaire provided with the invitation, some took the interview as an opportunity to showcase their products and programs. While these are relevant in gaining context into how feedback practices feed into their operations, it was not the point of the interview.
- Some social enterprises are legally registered as non-profit organizations, some of their staff also identify more as a non-governmental organization due to their social purpose nature in contrast with impact investors whose purpose is a return on their investment. This was a limitation in the way they perceived their roles in the feedback chain especially in closing the loop for the least heard.

Phase Three: Analysis

All the interviews were transcribed and a content and thematic analysis was undertaken to identify patterns to determine key findings based on the themes above. The analysis is also presented by organizational categories such as funders (foundations and impact investors); intermediaries such as incubators; and service purpose organizations such as social entrepreneurs and non-government organizations.

B. Products and Services of the impact (non-profit) organizations

The participating organizations had three general kinds of products and services. These are broadly categorized as financial, technical, and in-kind types of contributions. The ultimate hybrid organization — a foundation — can extend all three types depending on their programs, projects and activities. To a certain extent, they can even directly engage the communities served or the least heard voices through direct scholarship and mentorship activities. However, these activities are not limited to foundations. The core service of impact investors and incubators are to provide seed funding and financial incentives together with mentoring and other advisory support to social entrepreneurs.

Although NGOs are known to be frontliners among social purpose organizations, they also provide cash for work assistance to some individuals especially for humanitarian purposes. When it comes to disaster relief, both foundations and SPOs facilitate the provision of in-kind contributions such as relief goods. During non-disaster periods, foundations and

APPENDIX

SPOs also provide necessary equipment and tools to various communities to support their basic needs, especially relating to livelihood, health and education. Although there are a few organized association-based foundations, some incubators explicitly leverage their networks or support the creation and operations of networks to support budding entrepreneurs. In this manner, they both provide technical advisory as well as in-kind contributions. See Table 2.

Table 2: Products and Services

Financial	Technical/Advisory	In-kind Contributions
Grants	Knowledge Products	Equipment
Investments (equity, allowance)	Mentoring/Guidance	Secretariat/Backbone Support
Cash Transfers	Training and other educational modules	Platforms and Networking Facilitation; citizen mobilization
	Strategy/ Planning such as Ideation/ Venture formation	
	Accounting/financial management	
	Investment pipeline	

C. Program Delivery Sectors

The products and services of funders, intermediaries, and social purpose organizations also influence the topics of public good they support. The organizations interviewed covered a range of sectors and themes regardless of the size of their funding portfolio and staff. Table 3 provides a summary of the sector and themes that the study's participating organizations are involved in.

	Sectors and Themes	
Health	Sustainability	Education and Marginalized Groups
Early childhood development	Agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity, food security	Children across different life stage needs (0 to 24 years old)
Adolescents/ Pre-teen pregnancies	Climate change and circular economy, plastic waste reduction	Human rights-based child protection
Reproductive health	Disaster and emergency response	Empowerment and leadership
Universal health care	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	Women and Gender; Persons with Disability
Communicable diseases	Mobility and transport	
Nutrition		Integrated area development
Leadership and governance reforms		Community development
Mental health		Communications and Technology
		Civic education, nation-building



AVPN is a unique Pan-Asian funders' network catalysing the movement toward a more strategic and collaborative approach to philanthropy and social investment to address key social challenges facing Asia today and in the future.

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